Problems of COMMUNISM

China's "Uninterrupted Revolution"

STANLEY RICH
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RICHARD LOWENTHAL

Khrushchev's Policies

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Review by
F. L. CARSTEN

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China

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China's "Uninterrupted Revolution"

EDITORS' NOTE: When the Communists seized power in China in 1949, they were still regarded in some quarters as mere "agrarian reformers," unlike their totalitarian neighbors to the west. But as they steadily tightened their grip on the country—as the peasants began to be herded into collectives, workers deprived of their rights, intellectuals "brainwashed" and the middle classes throttled—the myth of Chinese Communist "reformism" faded away. Its brief revival during the "Hundred Flowers" campaign in early 1957 was quickly aborted by the ferocious struggle later unleashed against "rightists" and "deviationists."

It was not until 1958, however, that Communist China showed its real face to the world, proving beyond a shadow of doubt that—if anything—Peking was far more totalitarian, and far more "Stalinist" than post-Stalin Russia itself. The Quemoy and Matsu crisis, the persistent sword-rattling, the intransigent attitude toward Tito and "revisionism" in general, and finally the launching of the commune-system, paved the way for Peking's determined effort to impose what probably amounts to the most brutal system of regimentation devised in modern history. The first article below by Stanley Rich provides a glimpse at what the Chinese Communists have termed the "basis" of the future society—the agricultural communes. In the second article, Mr. Rousset discusses the general transformation in the Chinese countryside—a transformation that has resulted, to use his words, in the "universalization of forced labor." Finally, in "Shifts and Rifts in the Sino-Soviet Alliance," Mr. Lowenthal focuses on the threat that Peking's concept of "uninterrupted revolution" (so uncomfortably reminiscent of Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution")—and, more important, its militant policies within the Communist bloc—has posed to the hitherto undisputed leader of the Communist world, the USSR.

The Communes—Mao's "Big Family"

By Stanley Rich

AT DAYBREAK, bells ring and whistles blow to assemble. . . . In about a quarter of an hour the peasants line up. At the command of company and squad commanders, the teams march to the fields, holding flags. Here one no longer sees peasants in groups of two or three, smoking and going slowly and leisurely to the fields. What one hears are the sounds of measured steps and marching songs. The desultory living habits which have been with the peasants for thousands of years are gone forever. . . .

All the ties that bind the peasants are broken. . . . The frames of individual families which had existed for thousands of years have been completely smashed . . . Individualism has absolutely no market here.

The time is the present. The scene is Communist China. The words are not George Orwell's but those of a nationally-distributed party magazine. The subject is a "people's commune," some 26,000 of which have since April swallowed 98.2 percent of China's half-billion rural populace. As the quotation above so blatantly proclaims, one of the fundamental purposes behind the creation of China's new "basic social unit" is the com-

Mr. Rich is Hong Kong correspondent for the American Broadcasting Company and McGraw-Hill News Service. A slightly longer version of this article first appeared in *The New Republic* (Washington, D. C.) of January 5, 1959.

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plete destruction of the family system. The commune movement has further ends, of course. But Peking realizes that it can achieve none of these until it has first destroyed the family, that last possible breeding ground of organized resistance to Communist rule.

If this conclusion seems a bit strong, read from the party's September theoretical journal, *Red Flag:*

. . . We must undermine the capitalist type of social living built on the basis of the class exploitation system, and at the same time we must also undermine the family built on the basis of the class exploitation system. . . .

That kind of family which carried out individual production with the family or the household as the unit . . . was nothing but a poor cage for the working people. . . . Individual domestic labor . . . is also a remnant of the family under the conditions of individual production. . . . In the socialist society [individuals] will no longer have to worry over their inability to establish or to maintain a most simple family. . . .

In the socialist and communist collective body, everybody takes up labor with joy, and all jointly and reasonably share the fruits of their labor.

How is this to be done? By the simple expedient of physical separation. In the more advanced communes, children see their parents twice a month. Wives see their husbands only at mealtimes, which are given only half to eating and half to participating in discussion in vast communal mess-halls. Unless, of course, their husbands are "camping out" at work projects from 60 to 100 miles away from their commune base. Grandparents are isolated in "Happiness Homes" where they will serve the "big family" by tilling communal vegetable plots, weaving communal baskets or feeding communal chickens.

Even death is no escape. "We can't even bury our dead," one recent returnee from his now commune-ized birthplace said to me. "The party has ordered everyone in our commune to participate in a fertilizer-collection campaign and bring in his monthly quota of 10 pounds of human bones."

EXACTLY WHAT is a commune? To say merely that it is an administrative area under absolute party control is true enough, but gives no idea of the magnitude of the revolutionary concept involved. Only when compared with the collective that preceded it does the commune appear in its proper perspective.

The commune is *big.* The average commune as of the end of September holds 23,000 people. But the largest to date (in Kwangtung) numbers 300,000; another in Liaoning has 95,000. The collectives contained only a few dozen, at most a few hundred families.

The commune is *all-inclusive.* Whereas the collective concerned itself only with agricultural production, the commune supervises all agricultural, economic, cultural, political, social, educational, and military activity in its boundaries. The commune, Peking says, is the *final step* toward the collective ownership of society as envisaged by Marx, Engels and Lenin. Unlike the collective, where members were allowed to own their own plots of land and private property, the commune is its own owner. Personal possessions are a thing of the past. Everything belongs to everybody.

Peking's claim that the commune "was not thought out at random" but is "the natural trend of the development of the socialist revolution and socialist construction" can be taken at face value. Communist China is almost fanatically determined to become an industrialized nation. But to do this she must have a manpower reservoir capable of being thrown at will into massive industrial, conservation, communications and other capital-construction projects too big for the diminutive and scattered collectives to handle. The creation of such a manpower pool is the main purpose of the fantastic commune scheme.

AT LAST ACCOUNT, 100 million women have been "liberated" from the house-keeping, husband-caring and child-tending duties of the anachronistic "small family" and are now working instead—on farms, in steel plants or communal tailoring shops—for the "big family" of the commune as a whole. Children and oldsters are not exempt. A group of Young Pioneers (7- to 14-year-olds) in Canton recently smelted their first heat of medium-carbon steel. Inmates of a "Happiness Home" in Shansi are busily cultivating their own vegetable garden to provide food for the communal kitchen.

But even more important than this arbitrary increase in manpower is the fact that the new manpower is both mobile and interchangeable. "When the farming season is brisk," boasts a Honan report, commune members "will be busy in the field; and when the slack season in agriculture arrives, they can work in the factories." In this way, the worker in the commune is stripped of his technical identity. He may be a teacher one day, a farmer the next, a steel-smelter the next, depending on the desires of the commune cadres or, more likely, on the varying industrialization demands of the commune involved.

The commune, moreover, aims to solve that administrative bane of Red China's existence—the continual siphoning off for personal use by the peasantry of agricultural produce which Peking must export to earn for-

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eign exchange. This is no longer possible under the communal mess-hall system, which strictly rations food to all its inhabitants. (That this control is effective is evidenced by the sharp drop in overseas remittances to China through Hong Kong since the communes were established. Chinese in Hong Kong say it is useless to send money to their relatives on the mainland. The relatives write that no matter how much money they receive, they still get the same amount of food from their communal kitchens.)

CO-EXISTENT with the material aims of communes (control of manpower and agricultural production) are encompassing spiritual aims which have appalled both the foreign observer and many of the roughly 15 million overseas Chinese living mainly in Southeast Asia. For as Peking sees it, the commune resident must be stripped not only of his technical individuality but of his personal identity as well.

In the Yangchu'uan coal mine of Shansi—which, from current propaganda, appears to be serving as a pilot plant for the eventual extension of the commune system to urban as well as rural areas—Communist Party control would appear to be reaching its ultimate. De-familized male miners are housed by workshifts. Living with each shift is one party, one trade union and one Young Communist League official. Mealtimes and off-hours are spent in intensive indoctrination sessions idolizing the cult of the "big family." Called the "five togethers"—"eat together, live together, work together, study together and play together,"—this system, say the Yangchu'uan authorities in a masterpiece of understatement, "has an extremely far-reaching revolutionary significance."

Sparks of individualism may smolder underneath the surface but are already being obscured by an external protective coloring of communal uniformity and drabness. Through a mass purchasing system, for example, residents of the Chingfeng commune of Honan are already wearing identical spectacles, shoes, vests and overcoats; using identical canes, bicycles, flashlights, watches, thermos bottles, toothbrushes and toothpaste; playing (the younger set) with identical rubber balls, toy autos and wooden rifles.

Institution of the wage system in these and other communes has so far been perhaps Peking's strongest weapon to enforce compliance. Rigged to demand a minimum of 28 working days per month, the system provides that commune members are paid *only* if they satisfy the "main requirements" of "attitude toward labor, production techniques and intensity of labor."

But ironically, even the wage system will disappear if communes work out as Peking both plans and expects. For it has been made explicitly clear that in the communalized society even money will eventually become meaningless. Within 6 to 10 years every one of China's by then near-billion population will be totally and solely dependent on the commune. At the moment, the communes are eliminating all "bourgeois" differences: between workers and peasants, between town and country, between mental work and manual work, between peasants and intellectuals, between collective ownership and ownership by the people. "In the past," boasts Ta Kung Pao, "the masses aranged their needs in the following order: 'first food, second clothing, and third [other] needs.' Today the commune has enforced the 'four guarantees' and basically solved the problems of the members relating to food, residence, education and medical attention."

Tomorrow, Peking has further stated, the communes will have completely eradicated the concept of "unequal bourgeois rights" and will have ushered China into the final utopia of true communism where the "state will be limited to protecting the country from external aggression but will play no role at home."

WILL COMMUNIST CHINA'S rulers succeed in their commune-ization attempt? Those who argue that they will not, that even the most efficient totalitarianism must eventually strike a bed-rock of human resistance, can present compelling evidence to support their conclusion.

As early as September 4th the English-language *Peking Review* admitted there was "vacillation," "rumormongering" and "sabotage" among China's "landlord and rich peasant elements." After that came the belated news of extensive October purges in Liaoning and Shantung, where both provincial governors were among the party notables removed, and in the latter of which some 40,000 lesser party cadres were ousted from their posts. In November, Mao Tse-tung called together in Wuhan an almost unprecedented huddle of at least 16 of the party's all-powerful, 20-man Politburo and all of the party's provincial first secretaries. The conference has resulted in "slow-down" orders to over-zealous party cadres who are going too fast even for Peking. Since the meeting ended in mid-December, for example, some communes have been ordered to return confiscated brick stoves; others, who pay their workers part in cash and part in grain, have been instructed to increase the money percentage. Commune cadres who requisitioned the stoves to provide lime for fertilizer (and on the grounds

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that all cooking would henceforth be done in the communal kitchens anyway) overlooked the fact that the stoves also provide the peasants' only source of warmth during the winter. And apparently many peasants, hungry as they may be, still nourish a bourgeois respect for cash as a "status" symbol.

Furthermore, even the propaganda reports of "100-percent enthusiasm" are increasingly contradictory. Multitudinous dispatches describing various communal-kitchen plans indicate that the party has not yet hit upon the single formula which will satisfy both the stomach and the soul of the commune members.

Against glowing claims of success for the communal "Happy Homes" must be balanced other official reports disclosing that one Kwangtung commune of 55,000 has a total of only 105 happy homesteaders, and that in the entire province of 37 million, only 40,000 oldsters—one-tenth of one percent of the population—are now enjoying the blessedness of well-earned rest in the New China. Whether this contradiction proves that the Happiness Homes exist largely on paper, or that only the totally incapacitated are exempt from hard labor, it does indicate that China's communes are far from completion.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is much, if not more, to be said by those who feel that Grandfather Mao will indeed succeed in denuding his children of identity and transforming a fifth of the world's population into a faceless army answering only to the dictates of Peking.

First, it must be kept in mind that Mao's commune movement arose not from China's weakness but from China's strength. One observer has aptly described 1957 as China's "year of agony." Firmly in power and determined to industrialize, the party command was searching for a sure-fire means of tapping the nation's vast agricultural and industrial resources. The final decision: "voluntary" labor. Students and intellectuals left their classrooms and professions by the hundreds of thousands to serve "socialist construction" in mammoth irrigation, farming, and reforestation projects in the far north and northwest. By the end of the year, the Communist leaders looked down on what had been created and declared it good. If the application of massive manpower could achieve a doubled agricultural output in only one year, what could not be achieved by incorporating that principle into China's basic social structure! Thus arose the commune system.

Second, the party is approaching commune-ization in an undeniable mood of confidence. As if its 1957 "leap forward" were not enough, acts of omission by Soviet Russia and of commission by the United States have added fortuitously to the party's optimism. Peking propagandists have all but openly boasted that the commune movement has launched China into the era of pure communism whereas Soviet Russia is still mired in the transitional stage of socialism. US action in the Formosa Straits (though not deliberately provoked for the purpose as some observers have suggested) is nevertheless serving the party well as a "paper tiger" with which to bring an otherwise reluctant peasantry into line.

Third, unlike the strong-arm methods employed in its 1951 land-reform movement and its business-reform movements of 1952-53, the party this time is bending backwards not to push too hard. The emphasis, as the results of the Wuhan Conference attest, is on making haste slowly. Although the overall scheme is dogmatic, the tactics are not. Of the 26,425 communes set up through September 1958, no two are absolutely identical. The party is waging an eclectic, trial-and-error struggle to determine firstly which system is best for which areas, then eventually to devise an over-all commune standard for the country as a whole. If the struggle fails, it will not be because the party neglected to take a long, hard look before it leaped.

Blessings Easily Counted . . .

Members of the commune are directed to lead a collectivized life. Each person must work ten hours and engage in ideological studies for two hours a day. They are entitled to one day of rest every ten days.

In directing the militarization of organization, the adoption of combat spirit in action, and collectivization in livelihood, the CCP committee of the commune has discovered that some minor personal freedom should be granted to the members in order to develop their working enthusiasm to the fullest extent. For this reason, the CCP committee rules that all members are free to use their time as they wish outside of the ten hours of labor and two hours of ideological study each day, that husband and wife may have a room of their own, that members are permitted to make tea and other refreshments in their own quarters for themselves, and that women members may use their spare time to make shoes and mend clothes. . . .

The commune members have enthusiastically welcomed the small personal freedoms granted them by the CCP committee.

—From a New China News Agency report of Nov. 20, 1958, describing the Meihsien people's commune in Hunan province.

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Finally, party control in China is greater today than it has ever been, exceeding even that in the Soviet Union. (Speculation that this control might be endangered by the current "Every Man a Soldier" movement is erroneous. Contrary to her propaganda claims, Peking is arming no one who might turn against her. Militia "shock brigades" are limited to men between 16 and 30 and women between 17 and 22, with arms going even then only to "activists who have been selected after undergoing a rigid test in their attainments in becoming Communist and expert.") Certainly there is widespread objection, particularly among the intellectuals, to the commune system. But unarmed disillusionment is no effective answer to armed party power. In December 1958, Peking admitted the suppression since 1956 of four armed revolts (in one of which at least 100 Communist cadres were killed) in the predominantly Moslem northwest province of Kansu. Yet today Kansu is among the 15 provinces which have been fully commune-ized.

Communist China is not what she was 30 years ago. It would be fallacy indeed to luxuriate in the anachronistic concept of 400 million pig-tailed customers but a few steps advanced from the Stone Age. Strength, confidence, luck, caution and, above all, iron-fisted Communist Party control are all playing into Peking's hands. They are the symbols of today's New China, symbols both guiding and supporting the nation's leadership in its drive to achieve ultimate commune-ization.

The New Tyranny in the Countryside

By David Rousset

AN ESSENTIAL TRAIT of the Chinese Communist revolution—and one which of itself suffices to differentiate it profoundly from the Russian Revolution of 1917 and all other Communist revolutions in Europe over the past forty years—was that, in terms of social classes, it was the peasantry in arms, rather than the proletariat, the intellectuals, or any other group, which played the decisive role in the military victory of 1949 that established Communist rule in China. Today also, not so much by reason of its past revolutionary role as by virtue of its sheer numerical preponderance and vitally important role in the economy (for upon agricultural production, in the last analysis, depends the development of heavy industry), the peasantry remains a key element in the social make-up of the Chinese "People's Republic." Yet, this same peasantry has long since turned against the regime which its own victory placed in power, but which can sustain itself and achieve its totalitarian political and social ambitions only at the peasants' expense. It is this fundamental contradiction, now underlined more sharply than ever before by the imposition of the new tyranny of the "people's communes" in rural China, which lies at the core of Chinese Stalinist strategy.

A noted French writer, Mr. Rousset experienced imprisonment in a Nazi concentration camp during World War II, and subsequently, as editor of *Saturn*, published by the International Commission Against Concentration-Camp Practices, has devoted himself to exposing the same practices in the Communist world. His suit in 1950 against a Communist newspaper that had accused him of falsifying facts about Soviet concentration camps led to a celebrated trial (which he won) and brought the testimony of many former Soviet camp inmates before the general public.

The Big Deception

The steps by which the Stalinist leadership, having achieved power through the insurrectionary effort of the peasants, proceeded to defraud them out of the political and social benefits of their victory need be only briefly recapitulated. The regime's first moves were calculated to give seeming satisfaction to the peasant's basic demands for a more equitable distribution of the land. The Common Program, adopted October 1, 1949, to serve as a provisional constitution, guaranteed protection of the peasants' future property rights acquired through land reform. The Agrarian Reform Law of June 1950 paved the way for the start of land reform itself, carried out in the course of the next two years in a bloody, vio-

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lent campaign which "liquidated" the landlords, expropriated their lands, houses, and other property, and deprived even their families of civic rights and often of their liberty. The seized lands were redistributed among the poorer peasants, and after a fashion the latter also found their debts extinguished.

But even while the peasants welcomed these expected benefits, accompanying developments made them wary and even distrustful. Instead of being permitted to take the land as of right, they received it as a grant from the new functionaries of the regime who, from the moment that they entered the villages in conjunction with the land reform drive, placed themselves above the peasants, gave them orders emanating from still higher authority, enrolled them in organizations designed to serve not their own interests, but those of the state; who finally, after the age-old tradition of the Empire, installed their own police, registered the peasants, and imposed taxes. These developments were followed shortly by the enforcement of terror, and the peasant soon realized that he had paid for his parcel of land with the loss of his rights and liberty. Later, after the collectivization drive had begun in earnest, he was to realize that the regime intended to deprive him also of his land for the monopolistic proprietary state.

Already in 1951, while land reform was still incomplete, there were evidences that the peasants had become aware of the trap into which they had fallen, and had begun to resist their despoilers. The rift was one that not merely separated the peasants from the state and the party controlling it, but also divided the base of the party itself, to the very large extent that it was made up of peasants, from the Stalinist party apparatus proper. Thus, in a June 1951 report calling for intensified party political work in the countryside, Po I-po, a high party and government official, pointed to manifestations of "political dissatisfaction" among the peasantry and ascribed them to "erroneous conceptions" on the part of "a certain number of party members and cadres of peasant extraction" who could not comprehend that "the victory of the revolution was achieved thanks to the leadership of the working class represented by the Communist Party." He added:

They complain that the party is unjust toward the peasants. They say that the party has forgotten the peasants . . . , that it is killing the donkey after having made it turn the mill. They have a utopian conception of agrarian socialism.[1]

But such manifestations of protest were only the beginning. Between 1951 and 1955, peasant resistance became increasingly stubborn and positive, particularly after the autumn of 1952, when the regime took the offensive to nullify the effects of land reform through a large-scale effort to introduce the lower (first-stage) forms of agricultural collectivization, *i.e.*, mutual-aid teams and agricultural producers' cooperatives. Physically disarmed, the peasants were incapable of outright rebellion, but they resisted by every other means at their disposal: by strikes, by sabotage and acts of violence, and —most disruptive of all—by fleeing in large numbers from the countryside to the cities, abandoning their farms. Numerous official statements and diatribes in the party press during 1953-54 testified to the regime's keen sensitivity to this last tactic: for example, Chou En-lai's declaration (in a directive published April 17, 1953) that "the blind and disorderly afflux of peasants to the cities is seriously impeding farm work and the spring sowing, and is causing losses in agricultural production." [2]

Year of Decision

The situation created by the peasant's refusal to cooperate—aggravated still further by crop failures due to bad weather, causing famine in wide areas—was so serious that during most of 1953 the party leadership was gripped by indecision and grave internal discord. It was not, however, the party's goals that were the subject of dispute in the Politburo; the central objective remained as it had been conceived from the first by the Stalinist party leaders: the erection of what amounts to a state capitalist system in which the land and all means of production are concentrated in the hands of a monopolistic proprietary state, the state being not the instrument of society at large but the creature of the Stalinist party apparatus seeking to entrench itself as the dominant, privileged class. Such a system predicates the prior development of heavy industry as the essential means for assuring the power monopoly of the party-dominated state. In China, as in the Soviet Union, the development of heavy industry, in turn, required the collectivization of agriculture.

What was at issue in the leadership controversy of 1953 was solely the tempo of advance toward the party's fixed goal. Even so, the leadership faced a fateful choice.

[1] Published in *Jen-min jih-pao*, June 29, 1951.

[2] One year later, on March 15, 1954, *Jen-min jih-pao* wrote: "In certain regions, the phenomenon of the blind afflux of peasants to the cities has continued without diminution. In numerous places the situation has even become very serious. If nothing is done, this blind movement . . . will impair the spring planting and social order in the cities."

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On the one hand, under the conditions prevailing in 1953, to accelerate the pace of socio-economic transformation meant to enter into open and irrevocable conflict with 500 million peasants and risk shattering the party; it also meant committing the leadership to unrestricted terror both in the country and within the party: in short, to enter the cycle of Soviet Stalinism. On the other hand, to adopt a slower tempo, permitting the protracted continuation of quasi-capitalist productive relations, would involve sacrificing the prior development of heavy industry, and hence compromise the attainment of the state monopoly of power and the entrenchment of the party apparatus.

In the early months of 1953, there were clear signs of hesitation to face the obvious dangers of an all-out conflict with the peasantry. On February 15, the party leadership made public its "Decisions on Agricultural Cooperatives," which stated that "the individual economy of the peasants must continue to exist and expand for still a long period of time. Even the economy of the rich peasants must be allowed to continue to develop." A further declaration on March 16 admonished the party cadres to rectify their "adventurist tendency" toward "too great haste in the agricultural cooperativization movement" and to "explain to the peasants that their individual property will be protected."

These conciliatory signs proved misleading. In November 1953, evidently reflecting the final triumph of the strongly Stalinist faction led by Mao and Liu Shao-ch'i, the policy of compromise was repudiated and the die was cast for unrelenting class war against the peasantry. The first act of aggression was the enactment, on November 19, of a government decree providing for complete state control of the purchase and distribution of grain and for the punishment of violators of the regulations as "counterrevolutionaries." On December 16, a further decision was taken by the party leaders to accelerate the extension of agricultural producers' cooperatives to all parts of the country. Indicative, however, of the leadership's recognition of the need for extreme caution, the November 19 decree was not made public until February 28, 1954 (by the official New China News Agency), while the decision for rapid cooperativization, though disclosed in January 1954, actually was not given rigorous, full-scale application until the autumn, or even winter, of 1955.

Developments during 1954-55 made plain the reasons for this long delay. The first concern of the top party leadership was to assure itself of complete control of the party and state apparatuses and of the army. Hence, 1954 witnessed a thorough purging of all three, designed to liquidate all cliques and factions challenging the absolute authority of Mao and Liu Shao-ch'i. The purges were further reinforced by organizational changes in the organs of military control and the government, by the replacement of the Common Program with a permanent constitution on Stalinist lines, and by a thorough strengthening of the machinery of party discipline and of terror.[3] With the pyramidal structure of power complete, the next task was to reduce to submission all remaining elements of resistance in the cities which might ally themselves with the rebellious peasantry. This was the task accomplished in 1955 by the second major wave of anti-"counterrevolutionary" terror.

Leaping Through the Dialectic

We must follow the mass line and give equal emphasis to centralization and democracy, discipline and liberty, unification and individualism. . . . Some of the cadres interpret militarization as absolute obedience from the masses; but this way of thinking is wrong. Our militarization is based on democracy, and was created by the vast masses of peasants for the realization of the great leap forward. Militarization, adoption of the spirit of combat, and collectivization are a combination of democracy and centralization.

—Radio Hofei, December 3, 1958.

The decision of the Chinese Communist leaders to proceed with large-scale collectivization and to continue building up nationalized heavy industry faced a serious crisis during 1956, when it became evident that the agricultural cooperatives had failed to produce the expected crop output. It was on this increased output that the plans for China's industrial mobilization, its future as a major force in the Communist world, depended; the course of action to be taken was, consequently, a crucial decision not only for China, but for the entire Communist movement and for the world at large.

All during 1957 the battle raged behind the closed doors of the Politburo in Peking. In retrospect, the reverberations of this struggle on the international scene

[3] With particular reference to the perfectioning of the terror apparatus, 1954 marked the adoption of a whole series of measures, including regulations on re-education through forced labor, on the organization of "People's courts", on the organization of police offices, *etc.* For a complete compilation and analysis of Chinese Communist documents relative to the terror, see *White Book on Forced Labor in the People's Republic of China,* Paris, 1957.

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and within China itself seem clear enough. There was the abandonment of the efforts to set up Peking as a kind of liberal outpost within the Communist empire, manifested in the harsh condemnation of the Hungarian revolt, the heavy pressure upon the Gomulka regime, and the break with Belgrade; there were the strenuous attempts to limit the repercussions of the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, the evident disinterest in achieving a detente with the capitalist powers; on the domestic scene, there was the short-lived period of the "hundred flowers" with its vicious aftermath, and within the Chinese Communist Party itself, sharp criticism, questioning the very existence of the regime.

Confronted by the failure of the agricultural cooperatives, Mao Tse-tung and his associates had to make their choice. Apparently, several courses of action still remained open; but actually, having made his decision to forge ahead with the collectivization of the peasantry in 1953, Mao had become a prisoner of his actions. The alternatives were either to accept forced labor on a nationwide scale in order to raise agricultural output and strengthen the state monopoly of the means of production, or to see the entire system of state capitalism to which the party was committed crumble.

What were the factors in the Chinese economic and social structure which forced this fateful decision upon the Chinese Communist leadership? Briefly, there were three reasons: 1) the low level of technique and productivity in agriculture; 2) the social tensions resulting from the official attitude towards the peasantry; 3) the policy decision to give priority to the establishment of a nationalized heavy industry.

Technique and Productivity

The balance sheet in the winter of 1956 revealed that two years of tremendous propaganda efforts and the growth of a mammoth administrative machinery in the agricultural cooperatives had failed to bring about any significant improvement in agriculture. Moreover, as Liu Shao-ch'i, Vice-Chairman of the Communist Party told the eighth party Congress in September, 1956, the party had at its disposal neither the modern mechanical means nor the chemical fertilizer to bring about increased farm production. He went on to say:

We are putting agricultural cooperation into effect although we have no farm machinery. The mechanization of our agriculture can only be carried out in a proper and gradual manner parallel with the industrial development of our country, and taking into account the different growing conditions of each region. However, it is estimated that at the end of the second five-year plan the area of mechanized agriculture will be only ten per cent of the total area under cultivation. As under the first five-year plan the increase in the area under cultivation will be only a few tens of millions of *mou* [one *mou* equals ca. one-seventh of an acre], that is, about one-twentieth of the total cultivated area of the country. As to the production of chemical fertilizers, by 1962 we will not even have reached an average of three pounds per *mou* of cultivated area. Therefore, the principal means of increasing farm production during the second five-year plan will continue to be the activity of the farm cooperatives and the peasant masses themselves in increasing output per unit by applying the following methods: construction of hydraulic systems, use of a greater quantity of [human] fertilizer, soil improvement and seed selection, greater use of new-type farm implements, increase in the number of yearly crops, improvement in farm methods, campaigns to control insect and plant-disease damage, etc.[4]

In other words, Chinese agriculture would be relying in the foreseeable future on traditional practices and methods—the very practices which had failed to bring about higher returns in the past. The pattern of using few farm animals, light plows, harrows, gardening techniques, human fertilizer, and vast amounts of human labor would not change; neither, for that matter, would the high ratio of agricultural workers to area under cultivation. But as the Communist leaders knew well, the traditional pattern was self-defeating, for the over-abundant labor-force—the one bright picture in the entire situation—also had to be fed and thus would consume a good part of its own production, leaving less for the market. Moreover, a farm economy which relied so heavily on manual labor could not easily expand, and thus increase the aggregate area under cultivation.

Under these conditions, the Communist leadership apparently concluded that the only sure method for increasing agricultural production was to extract a greater work output from the already overburdened peasants.

Social Tensions

The basic problem was that the peasant had not been converted to communism. And how could he have been converted or convinced? Thrown into the cooperative farms, supplied only with his traditional tools (the state being completely incapable of replacing them with modern instruments), obliged therefore to follow ancestral methods of cultivation, how could the peasant interpret his new position as representing social progress? On the contrary, how could he fail to view the new Communist policy as anything but a police act, a frustration of his basic yearnings?

[4] New China News Agency (hereafter referred to as NCNA), Peking, September 16, 1956.

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To claim that even under these conditions, even in bondage, the Chinese peasant lived better than under the empire, the war-lords, or the Kuomintang, is merely to evade the real issue. The peasant had made war on precisely that kind of servitude, and he had won. The war he had fought and the victory which had sanctioned and established the new regime were won in the name of the principles later embodied in the Common Program—the principles and pledges of land reform and respect for the peasant's property rights. The comparison between his status under the Communist regime and that under the previous regimes is therefore meaningless; what matters is the chasm between the small landowner status guaranteed him by the land reform and his present impoverished position. Small wonder, then, that the peasant remained socially and politically hostile to the Communist powers. To be sure, he had lost a battle: he was deprived of the property bestowed upon him by the land reform, and was forced to accept the cooperatives, with their vastly inefficient and impoverishing wage and profit-sharing system. But as soon as the prison gates would open the least bit, he would take the offensive again, tenacious and stubborn, and rush to the cities. The result of this continuous migration, of course, was the strengthening of the social class of shopkeepers, hostile to the regime, and the further impairment of agricultural production.

There was yet another cause for the social tensions generated by the agricultural policy of the Communist rulers. Everywhere a bureaucratic system of frightful ponderousness and inefficiency had arisen, which held a stranglehold on the productive forces. The need for coercion in "reforming" the peasants called for a vast regulatory machinery, while the suppression of private initiative and of the open market engendered an enormous multiplication of administrative and accounting services, whose unwieldiness was compounded by lack of qualified, trained personnel. The entire system was in fact so wasteful, that it wiped out in advance any possible economic benefits which might have been derived from it.

Even more important, perhaps, from the point of view of the state, was the fact that the production cooperatives, organized apart from the state administration, had developed their own economic and administrative machinery, which eventually was bound to conflict with state interests. While the agricultural cooperatives were useful in eliminating the gains of the land reform by absorbing small and medium peasant holdings, they also brought about the concentration of land holdings apart from, and only indirectly subject to, state control. The newly established bureaucracy set itself up in competition with the state bureaucracy, a situation which led to intense struggles and violent accusations against the *kanpu*, the rural administrators. Thus an editorial in *Jen-min Jih-pao* declared:

Before collectivization, while the peasants were still working independently, the tyranny of the *kanpu* could only be exercised by means of political pressure. Now that the majority of the peasants have joined the agricultural production cooperatives of the superior category, the local *kanpu* have at their disposal not only political but also economic means to terrorize the people. They say, "Since the land belongs to the cooperatives, we have the peasants by the throat and they will do what we want them to." He who disobeys the *kanpu* has his wages cut or his right to work suspended. They employ this double method of pressure during meetings and even during cultural gatherings.[5]

Lastly, dangerous economic differentiations were cropping up on this new social terrain, resembling the reappearance in the preceding period of a peasant class of medium landowners. Some production cooperatives were becoming rich, a situation which the party, of course, viewed with alarm.

Clearly the system of agricultural production cooperatives had introduced such elements of social tension and conflict that a stepped-up drive for work output required new administrative methods.

Industrial Priorities

The tasks of establishing a base of heavy industry increased the demand for investment capital to an unprecedented degree. The peasant, the chief supplier of state revenues, had to be induced somehow to increase his contributions, although for the present at least, he would not benefit from the increased industrial investments.

The logic of events, therefore, forced the Communist leadership to reinforce its decision of 1953 by applying forced labor to the entire production process and by establishing a politically more satisfactory rural social structure.

Mao's decision to introduce forced labor as the predominant feature of labor relations in China preceded the decision to establish people's communes. The communes were only one of the possible forms for administering such a system but, as it turned out, they actually

The French writer René Dumont, known for his pro-Communist sympathies, has the following to say on the success of the cooperatives in *Revolution dans les campagnes chinoises*, pp. 338-339): "Highly intensive truck-gardening produces much food, but, there again, at what cost! Often more than 400 days of human labor per acre."

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THE HUNDRED FRUITS?

A Chinese cartoon, titled "Big Root, Luxuriant Leaves," depicts the amalgamation of collectives into people's communes, whence will grow the future tree of plenty.

—From Jen-min jih-pao (Peking), Sept. 18, 1958.

became the chief instrument in the second revolutionary attempt to establish a concentrationary-type state society in China.[6]

Chinese communism, of course, did not invent the contemporary technique of forced labor: it inherited both the doctrine and the practice from Russian Stalinism, and began to apply it as early as 1950, when it established the Reeducation-through-Work Corps.[7] In agriculture, the state farms, until about 1955, used almost exclusively prison labor, consisting for the most part of political prisoners. Thus duress has been a permanent element in the Chinese economy for the last eight years. The application of forced labor to the entire production process, however, not only brought with it an increase of coercion *in toto,* but it also caused a new metamorphosis in China's social structure, of which the people's communes are one, and perhaps only a temporary, manifestation.

[6] *Jen-min jih-pao,* June 27, 1956. Similarly, the CC of the CPC, in its Instructions of November 24, 1956, described the *kanpu* as "a privileged group cut off from the masses."

[7] "Concentrationary" in the sense used here refers to a social system based on mass coercion—*i.e.,* a system which applies the *practices* of concentration camps to society as a whole.

The chief immediate goal of the Communist leadership, as we have seen, was to maximize farm production, and to do so while still using primarily traditional methods of cultivation. To accomplish this and accomplish it cheaply, required a great intensification of physical effort and maximum integration of hitherto unproductive periods of rural activity, such as the winter season, into the total productive process.

The entire country had to be transformed into a year-round workshop, digging canals and wells, dragging rivers, draining swamps, building levees, carrying fertile soil onto naked rock, reforesting—all in addition to the normal routine of sowing and harvesting. The conditions of life resulting from such super-human effort are in every way comparable to the darkest moments of the great labors in the ancient Chinese empire.[8]

The first and probably most important consequence of the universalization of forced labor was the transformation of the productive process from individual labor applied to small parcels of land to mass labor applied to large areas. Again the technique of operation had imposed its own logical framework. Coercion implied supervision, immense tasks required immense numbers and extensive areas of activity. Great labor armies conceived along lines of mobile military units were the answer, and this, in fact, was the course on which the Politbureau embarked in 1957. It did so stealthily, without drawing any public conclusions from the failure of the production cooperatives, without justifying its decisions by considerations of principle, without finding a legal formula for its actions.

Labor Armies

The first attempts to organize the peasants into mass labor armies date back to 1956. In 1957 the methods were perfected, and in 1958 the new doctrine was officially promulgated. Official statistics show that in 1956, 17 million workers in five provinces were put to work on water projects; however, this labor force was still split up among small sites and thus in a sense belongs to another era. In 1957 another stage was reached when, at first, five to six hundred thousand peasants were mobil ized in the depth of winter in one Manchurian province to work on canals and construction. From then on, the figures climb rapidly: in Kiangsi province a million peasants; in Shansi 2,500,00; in Kansu, 3,400,000; in Hupei, 5,500,000; in Honan, 10,000,000; in Shantung, 15,000,000, etc. In August 1958, after ascertaining that the 1958 harvest results would top those of 1957 by a

[8] On all these points, see *White Book, op cit.*

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considerable margin, the new doctrine of the communes was officially adopted.[9]

The Chinese press has provided the official data on the numbers of peasants mobilized into the labor armies. It has also indicated the required speed of the job: *"Two days' work in one,"* and, *"Let us start in at dawn, and continue at night under the floodlights."* Po-I-po, long a top economic expert, announced in February of last year the mobilization of a hundred million peasants, men and women, for hydraulic projects alone. Fu Tso-yi claimed at the same time that irrigated areas were being increased at the rate of 40,000 acres per day. The press, as always, worked itself up to a high pitch over the figures: 200,000 wells dug in one month in one province, 95% of the peasants of another mobilized in the depth of winter, etc.

Using anachronistic, traditional techniques, then, but through the universalization of forced labor, the party had at last attained a high agricultural output. And once the rural areas were completely reduced to forced labor, the system of coercion inevitably spread to the industrial sectors. In October 1958 the labor-army technique was officially introduced into industry, the mines, and public works. The transportation bottleneck was overcome by mobilizing armies of several million men for road construction, and by turning humans into beasts of burden on an unprecedented scale. Ore, coal, finished products, as well as earth and water—all were transported on men's backs, drawn or pushed by numberless coolies, from one frontier of China to the other.[10] Finally, with the excess population at its disposal, the Politburo organized labor reserve armies which could at any time be concentrated on one or another sector of the economy.

Once forced labor dominates the entire economy, it requires the universal and permanent presence of force. This fact was given implied recognition with the official establishment of a new "people's militia" in August 1958. Consisting of trusted young activists, both male and female, these *armed* units are apparently organized within the large *unarmed* labor armies. According to *Jen-min jih-pao* report on one militia unit in Honan province, the mission of the militia there is to "encourage the forward march of production . . . on a combat basis."

The compulsory assignment of millions of peasants to non-farm labor outside the cooperative framework (hydraulics, mines, road building, transportation, reforestation, heavy industry), added to the usual work in the fields, has for the first time created a shortage of unskilled labor in China. The shortage was worsened by the fact that the villages were obliged to cover their own industrial needs. The peasants had to manufacture their own plowshares, tools, and all the implements needed for everyday life. They were required to dig their own coal and ore, build their own forges and

PEASANTS IN UNIFORM

Life in Hsushui is probably best described by the slogan of commune members—"organize along military lines, work as if fighting a battle and live the collective way!"

Speaking of organizing along military lines, Hsushui can be truly called a county of citizen-soldiers. Everywhere you go you will find young militiamen carrying rifles, drilling early in the morning before they go to work in the fields and after work in the evening. All able-bodied members of the communes have enlisted in the militia, but these rifle-carrying young men and women (men between 16 and 30; women between 17 and 22) are the "key militia" or the core of the militia forces. These young people not only constitute the background of the militia but also serve as a shock brigade labor force. . . .

During the building of water conservancy works last spring and the subsequent fight against drought, Hsushui peasants discovered that the best form of labor organization is to do things along military lines. Compactly organized, and tackling a job in a *"zhandouha"* way—as if fighting a battle—a labor force can double its efficiency. . . . But why give them rifles? "To defend our country against any aggressor—to safeguard peace!," as one young man explained.

—From "The Commune: A New Way of Life in the Village," Peking Review, September 30, 1958.

[9] *Jen-min jih-pao* relates that in one region the peasants, in the springtime, carried the earth required for reforestation in baskets, from the far plain to the mountains. Then, in the winter, they carried the water needed for the irrigation of the seedlings into the mountain reservoirs, filling their eternal baskets with snow and ice.

[10] The Politburo met at Pei-tai-ho from August 17 to 30, 1958. The resolution on the People's Communes adopted at that time was not published by *Jen-min jih-pao* until September 10, 1958. The same newspaper had previously published, on September 4, the "Draft Constitution for the 'Sputnik' Commune." These two publications were followed on October 17 by a long article by Li Hsien-nien, Minister of Finance and member of the Central Committee, entitled "What I Saw in the Communes." These three texts constitute the official basic documents on the new doctrine.

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smelters, make their own steel and convert it into finished goods.

The peasants drafted into the reserve labor armies were consequently transformed into what is called polyvalent manpower. In other words, *the same workers* were to be used for work in the fields, land improvement or in industry, according to the season and the immediate requirements. In addition, they were to be (and indeed are) employed where they happened to be needed, close to home, or hundreds of miles away. Thus uprooted from their natural surroundings, the peasants find themselves dependent on military-type services such as soup-kitchens, mobile (and uncomfortable) sleeping accommodations, etc.

Lastly, the labor shortage has led to the total mobilization of women for production. By integrating women into the labor armies, the overthrow of the social structure of the villages is to be completed. The peasant family as an organism is to be destroyed. Its members are distributed among different labor groups, taken up by different tasks, often at different times of day and in different places. Since they are unable to care for their remaining private property, the peasants' gardens, fruit trees, barnyard and animals become the *de facto* charge of the local administration before being turned over to it *de jure*. The same applies to the children, and for similar reasons. With the land gone, the private tombs are plowed under and the ancient ancestor-cult disappears.

The universalization of forced labor brings with it a new division of labor requiring the construction of dining halls, nurseries, sewing centers, laundries, etc. The dining hall becomes the central institution of the community, the symbol of the final demolition of traditional family ties, and one of the most striking manifestations of the exploitation of the Chinese peasantry.

The production of consumer goods, too, must be revamped in accordance with the new needs and prerogatives. In many cases, families have been deprived of kitchen utensils—pots, ovens, spoons, dishes. Copper objects were seized and replaced by earthenware. In the manufacture of many finished products, bamboo, brick, and glass were substituted for metal.[11] The production of thermos bottles was increased, so as to enable peasants to procure hot water from the community kitchens. For the same reasons the demand for more porcelain, corks, flashlights and raincoats has increased. With characteristic lack of humor, the Chinese press has also indicated that more notebooks and paper will have to be produced, lest the mushrooming administrative bureaucracy be deprived of its basic tools.

Wage Slaves, Communist Style

The peasant, stripped of his physical property, no longer has any share in the profits, yet neither has he become a normal wage-earner. Computing a wage requires a precise work unit; by its very nature, forced labor has none. The length of work varies, as does its nature—all in accord with the demands of the moment. In such a system, the methods of computing wages are subject to arbitrary administrative decisions—a fact that helps to explain why Communist sources are so annoyingly obscure on this point. In effect, the arbitrary wage becomes a tool in the hands of the party bureaucracy. Articles 14 and 15 of the "Draft Constitution of the 'Sputnik' Commune"—the first model commune set up last summer—bears this out:

> **The commune shall operate a wage system when it acquires stability of income and adequate funds and its members are able voluntarily to consolidate labor discipline. The wages of members shall be fixed by the masses through discussion, taking into account the intensity and complexity of the work, the physical circumstances, technique, and attitude to work. . . . Technical allowances may be paid to the people who possess special skills. . . . After the institution of the wage system, there must be periodic reviews and comparisons of work done by the various units and individuals. Those who have worked energetically and do well shall be rewarded, while those who have worked in a slovenly way and failed to carry out their assignment may be penalized by deductions from their wages. Awards distributed in the commune in a year may amount to a maximum of one-fourth of total basic wage.**
>
> **With the institution of the wage system, every member may have two days' paid leave each month, and women members three days. . . . Until conditions are mature for the institution of the wage system of piece work, wages may be fixed in value per working day, and members paid monthly according to the number of days worked. . . .**[12]

Intimately tied to an arbitrary wage system is the new pattern of food distribution in the communes. Food is centrally distributed on the basis of ration coupons, and the circulation of money is restricted. The computation of food rations is the responsibility of the bureaucracy,

[11] On this score, too, the press has waxed enthusiastic. It reported that Szechwan Province mobilized ten million new recruits for coal, ore mining and for the production of cast iron, pig iron and steel. Three million peasants are to be responsible for transporting the raw materials and the finished products. Honan Province mobilized 700,000 workers for road-building; Shantung did the same for ore transportation and railroad construction. *Jen-min jih-pao* of October 17, 1958, celebrated the "miracle" of one county in Kwangsi which, having drafted 70,000 inhabitants into the coal mines, extracted in a single day 670,000 long tons.

[12] *Ta Kung Pao*, Peking, October 5, 1958.

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and therefore lends itself to all sorts of extortion, blackmail, and corruption. Despite its optimistic phrases, an editorial in *Jen-min jih-pao* of September 4, 1958, sheds much light on the intentions of the authorities in this matter:

When the growth of farm production and the unanimous consent of the members of the communes permit, a system of distribution to each member of part-payment in kind will be applied. This system is a better guarantee of the income to each member of the commune, and it allows the commune to reinvest the profits from production; it will also facilitate the development of industry, transportation, education, and culture, and will thus be in better position to contribute to the welfare of all.[13]

Of interest too, is an article published on October 17, 1958, by Finance Minister Li Hsien-nien, confirming the arbitrary character of the wage-food distribution system:

Most communes have applied the formula, "half supply, half wages," of which the first part may be translated, "To each according to his needs," and the second, "To each according to his labor." As to the first, they apply either the system of the "seven guarantees" in the following fields—food, clothing, medical care, childbirth, education, housing, marriages, and funerals—or a system of five or six guarantees according to the economic state of the commune. Wages vary between 4 and 15 yuan per month.[14] As a general rule, each member receives yearly 50 yuan in cash and 50 yuan in supply. In some communes, the supply portion is greater than the wage portion, and in others the opposite is true. In any case, free meals and a regular income represent an unprecedented phenomenon for the peasants.

* * *

The pitiful state of the Chinese peasant, deprived of his liberty, his land, goods and traditional family ties, has thus found its most salient expression in the institution of the communes. Yet the communes are but one possible form—and therefore possibly only a temporary one—of the fundamental changes introduced in the fabric of Chinese society, in the system of labor control and the production process.

The universalization of forced labor is destroying the last vestiges of private property in the countryside. It has given the state—for the first time in Chinese history—complete monopoly over the land. It has destroyed the power of the bureaucracy of the production cooperatives and brought about the complete identity of state and local administration. As for the future, an editorial in *Jen-min jih-pao* of September 4, 1958, had this to say:

From private property, we will change to public property. All the land still held by individuals, private houses, animals, woods, etc., must progressively become property of the commune. Individuals will temporarily continue to hold small numbers of animals and fowl, which gradually will be absorbed by the commune. Thus the last vestiges of personal property will slowly die out. Such an organization of production will favor the development of the society and that of the national economy.

Whether this prediction will come true remains to be seen. Already there is evidence that the "great leap forward" has engendered a crisis within China as well as within the entire Communist bloc.[15] But whatever the temporary setbacks, the effort to communize China is bound to go on—an effort that makes the nightmare world of Orwell's *1984* look almost innocent and cheerful by comparison.

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[13] NCNA, September 5, 1958.

[14] The unofficial exchange rate of the yuan is $1: 2.50 yuans.

[15] On December 10, the CC of the CPC passed a resolution strikingly reminiscent of Stalin's famous "Dizzy with Success" article of 1930, and calling a halt on some of the excesses of the communization program. The resolution, in effect, constitutes an admission of both the difficulties encountered at home, as well as of the differences that have arisen between Peking and Moscow in regard to the communes. (See Richard Lowenthal's article in this issue—Ed.)

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Shifts and Rifts in the Russo-Chinese Alliance

By Richard Lowenthal

ONE OF THE MOST important international developments of the past year has been a major shift in the balance of power between the Soviet Union and Communist China—a shift which has not, of course, led to the assumption of leadership by China, nor even to full equality, but to a more effective, if still unequal, partnership of the two great Communist powers in world affairs. For the first time in the history of their alliance, there is now clear evidence that Soviet policies towards the non-Communist world (not merely within the "socialist camp") and in both European and worldwide affairs (not merely within a region where Chinese interests are directly affected) have been modified by the impact of Chinese pressure. The resulting new relation of worldwide partnership in the formation of policy, which involves an obligation to regular and allround (as distinct from occasional and regionally restricted) advance consultation, has been formally recognized in the joint Soviet-Chinese communique published after Mr. Khrushchev's Peking talks last August. At the same time, the Chinese Communist leaders not only have shown that they remain determined to seek their own solutions to their own peculiar domestic problems, but have boldly underlined the originality of these solutions in a manner which makes them appear as a potential model for other Asian countries, and which thus constitutes an implicit challenge to Russia's ideological leadership of the international Communist movement.

The evidence for the above thesis can be found in the record of the Soviet bloc campaign against Tito's Yugoslavia, in the history of Mr. Khrushchev's abortive proposal for a "summit conference" on the Middle East crisis of last summer, and in the development of the Chinese campaign for the formation of "people's communes" as the new, quick road to "the building of socialism and the transition to communism." But before such evidence is submitted, two possible objections must be met.

The first of these is that the power shift of 1958 is not a wholly new development: on the contrary, it is only the latest stage in a process which has been going on steadily at least since the death of Stalin. Indeed the imitation of "Maoist" strategies by some Asian Communist parties began shortly after the Chinese Communists' domestic victory—thus within Stalin's lifetime and with his apparent agreement. China's full status as an Asian great power was recognized in the arrangements for the Geneva conference of 1954, which negotiated the Indochinese armistice, and in the modification of the terms of the Soviet-Chinese alliance (including Moscow's renunciation of its remaining occupation rights) during the Peking visit of Khrushchev, Bulganin and Mikoyan later that year. China was the pioneer of the new Soviet bloc attitude toward the uncommitted countries of Asia, as embodied in its sponsorship of the "five principles" of coexistence and of the Bandung conference, which led to Khrushchev's explicit revision (in his report to the Twentieth CPSU Congress) of the doctrinaire view that these countries were still governed by "imperialist stooges".

Finally, the crisis of Soviet authority in the international Communist movement, brought about by the shock of "destalinization" and in particular by the events of October 1956 in Poland and Hungary, created a situation where international unity and discipline could only be restored by mobilizing the intact authority of the Chinese Communist leaders; and the latter, vitally interested in the economic, diplomatic and military cohesion of the bloc, used their prestige among European Communists to restore respect for "the leading role of the Soviet Union"—first by their New Year's Eve pronouncement of 1956-57 on the lessons of Hungary,[1]

Mr. Lowenthal, whose articles appear frequently on these pages, is now at work on a book tentatively entitled *Totalitarianism and Social Change.*

[1] "Further on the historical experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat," *Jen-min jih-pao* (People's Daily), Peking, December 29, 1956.

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then by their "mediating" intervention in Poland, and finally by Mao's speech at the Moscow conclave of ruling Communist parties in November 1957.[2] What was new in 1958 was not the growth of Chinese influence on bloc policies as such, but the extension of that influence beyond either the regional affairs of Asia or the internal affairs of the Communist movement—and the indications that this latest extension was achieved at least partly in conflict with the Soviet leaders, and accompanied by preparations for far-reaching ideological rivalry.

This last point gives rise to the second objection. Clearly, the interests which the Communist regimes of Russia and China have in common at present far outweigh any causes of conflict between them: one can only speak of limited conflicts within an overriding community of interests—just as one should when studying the relations between the major partners of the Western alliance. It is for this reason that the writer has so far been emphasizing the *shift* in the balance between the Communist powers rather than the *rift* between them. Nevertheless, a rift has become visible during 1958, and it is based both on genuine and important, if still subordinate, conflicts of interest and on a deeply-rooted divergence of ideological development.

The Factors of Friction

One cause of conflict is that Communist China is still vitally dependent on the Soviet Union and its European satellites, both militarily and for its industrial growth, but naturally wishes to reduce that dependence as quickly as possible; while the Soviet Union has a major interest in having a great Asian power as its ally, it does not wish that ally—which is also its chief Eastern neighbor—to become more powerful too quickly. Another source of disagreement is that the Soviet Union is in a phase of development where, while not averse to using local threats and occasionally force to gain foreign policy objectives, it wants to assure its citizens that they may go about their business without fear of major war; while China is in a phase where the Communist leaders, though probably as unwilling to provoke world war as their Soviet colleagues, need the atmosphere of the "beleaguered fortress" and of war hysteria as much as Russia needed it 20 or 30 years ago in order to dragoon their peoples into exceptional efforts.

Combined with the facts of geography and the differences in diplomatic status, these different views of the desirable pace for the growth of Chinese strength and of the relative uses of tension or relaxation in world affairs are bound to find expression in different estimates of the relative urgency, say, of a "summit conference" without Communist China or of a diplomatic crisis to force a solution of the "Taiwan question"; of the relative priority to be given in Soviet economic planning to capital aid for the Chinese ally as against uncommitted neutrals; and—least publicly discussed and most important among these critical issues—of the desirability of agreement on the banning of atomic tests under international control, which would result in a closing of the "nuclear club" and hence in the permanent dependence of China on Russia for obtaining nuclear weapons. Nor is it surprising that under the pressure of these conflicts the Chinese Communists' tradition of self-reliance in working out their own strategy without regard to foreign models—a tradition with a long history which does not need tracing here—has given rise to an ambitious and explosive new concept of a specific road to communism for overpopulated and underdeveloped countries unable or unwilling to rely on foreign capital aid, whether from "capitalist" or "socialist" sources.

Given Moscow's and Peking's undoubted awareness of their overriding community of interests as against these important differences, and given the total control of the published word exercised by both, it is understandable that no explicit arguments and only a few implicit disagreements on these critical issues can be found in the public record. Nevertheless, the writer believes that their impact can be traced in a number of symptoms of wavering and apparent indecision which have appeared in Soviet foreign policy during 1958, and which are difficult to account for otherwise.

These symptoms have been widely noticed in the West, and have led a number of observers to make conjectures about new divisions within the Presidium of the Soviet Communist Party. Yet while it is, of course, perfectly possible that some of the Presidium members incline to differ from Mr. Khrushchev and from each other on tactical questions of foreign policy, all the evidence suggests that Khrushchev's control of the party and government machine has become virtually unchallengeable since the successive elimination first of the "anti-party-group" and then of Marshal Zhukov in 1957 (none of Khrushchev's Presidium colleagues any longer controls any power apparatus of his own), and whatever rivalry now survives in the policy-making inner circle is

[2] See the report on Mao's intervention in the November conference by F. Ebert in *Neues Deutschland*, East Berlin, November 30, 1957.

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merely in the nature of competition for influence with the new dictator and for his eventual succession. Repeatedly during 1958, Mr. Khrushchev has publicly proclaimed new domestic policies—from the dissolution of the MTS to the educational reform—without bothering to obtain the advance approval of any of the constitutional organs of the party. If, then, he has shown symptoms of uncertainty in foreign affairs, it would seem logical to look for the cause not in any weakness of his domestic position, but in a diplomatic tug-of-war due to divergencies between his own conceptions and those of his major ally.

Peking and the Moscow-Belgrade Quarrel

The first case where sudden changes in the emphasis of Soviet policy became apparent was the new break with Tito's Yugoslavia in the spring; and here the violence of Chinese participation in the conflict has been so striking that a number of Western students have been led to attribute the whole break to Chinese initiative, and to assume that it was somehow forced on a reluctant Khrushchev by pressure from Peking.[3] In this extreme form, the theory is contradicted both by the public chronology of events and by what limited inside knowledge is available from Yugoslav sources. The Yugoslav leaders insist that they expected the break since they first received the draft of the "declaration of principles" that came to be adopted by 12 ruling Communist parties—but not by them—in Moscow in November 1957, with its emphasis on the obligation of all Communists to support the Warsaw military pact and its doctrinaire condemnation of "revisionism". The Yugoslavs have also stated that Khrushchev himself warned their delegates they would be politically attacked when they refused to sign that document.[4] Thus the final draft of the new Yugoslav party program, which became the formal pretext for the attack in the spring, was prepared and published in the knowledge that the break was coming.

The Soviet decision not to send fraternal delegates to the Yugoslav party congress and to "advise" the other ruling parties not to send any—a clear step towards formal excommunication—was taken on April 5 or 6, *i.e.*, while Khrushchev was in Hungary, and as soon as he had heard Kadar's report on the results of his efforts to get the program changed in essentials; we now know from Mr. Gomulka that a similar attempt was undertaken, apparently at the same time, by two members of the Polish Politburo.[5] During the same days of early April the first public attack on the new Yugoslav program—a joint article by Fedoseyev, Pomyalov and Cheprakov in No. 6 of the Moscow *Kommunist*—was passed for publication; it came out in time for distribution before the Yugoslav party congress, and while formally still couched in "comradely" language, condemned the draft root and branch as a "revisionist" document. On April 21st, still before the Yugoslav congress but after the publication in Belgrade of some amendments to the passages which had caused most offense in Moscow, Pyotr Pospelov, secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, said in an official Lenin Memorial speech that "objectively speaking, the draft program of the LCY looks like a document intended, in effect, to weaken the unity of the Communist and workers' parties, to weaken the unity of the socialist states." And while he formally expressed the hope that the Yugoslav party congress would substantially revise the draft, the refusal to send fraternal delegates made it clear that no such hope was really entertained and that the formal breaking off of party relations was being prepared. With the determined rejection of Soviet interference and the adoption of the program by the congress, the break became inevitable.

THE FIRST CHINESE intervention in the discussion—an editorial published by the Peking *People's Daily* on May 5th—did not take place until a week after the conclusion of the Yugoslav congress, and a full month after the basic Soviet decision had been taken. There is thus no evidence whatever to back the hypothesis of "Chinese initiative" in provoking the break. Nevertheless, the Chinese intervention marked an important new development—the partial extension of the break to the field of state relations. Up to that moment, all indications were that the Soviet leaders wished to excommunicate the Yugoslav Communists from the international Communist movement as heretics, but to demonstrate at the same time that, in contrast to Stalin's practice, they would not allow the ideological conflict to interfere seriously in their diplomatic relations with a friendly neutral state. Even while the Yugoslav congress was in progress, public statements to this effect were made by two members of the Soviet Party Presid-

[3] *Cp.*, G. F. Hudson, "New Phase of Mao's Revolution," *Problems of Communism*, No. 6 (Nov.-Dec.) 1958.

[4] For the Yugoslavs' version, see the present writer's analysis in "Tito's Gamble," *Encounter*, London, October, 1958.

[5] Speech at the Soviet-Polish friendship meeting in Moscow, *Pravda*, Nov. 10, 1958.

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ium who happened to be abroad—Mikoyan in Bonn and Furtseva in Poland.

The *People's Daily* article went much further, however: it was the first to state publicly that the original condemnation of the Yugoslav party by the Cominform in 1948 had been "basically correct"; it reintroduced the Stalinist method of appealing to the Yugoslav rank-and-file over the heads of the "leaders"; and it charged bluntly that "the program put forward by the Yugoslav revisionists fits in exactly with what the imperialists, and particularly the American imperialists want." In short, it prepared the atmosphere for treating the Yugoslav leaders not as friendly if ideologically misguided neutrals, but as agents of the imperialist enemy—a conclusion explicitly drawn in later Chinese Communist documents.[6]

This shift of emphasis was all the more important because the *People's Daily* article was published on the eve of a meeting of the Central Committee of the CPSU. No resolution on Yugoslavia was published after that meeting, though the obvious fact that the subject was discussed has since been confirmed.[7] Even while the meeting was in progress, *Pravda* belatedly published Khrushchev's and Voroshilov's congratulations to Tito on his re-election as President of Yugoslavia and his reply. But immediately afterwards (May 9), a *Pravda* editorial condemning the Yugoslav program labeled as "naive" the view that state relations might remain unimpaired by ideological differences, suggested that American aid to Yugoslavia was given as a reward for services rendered in disrupting the "socialist camp," and hinted that Soviet credits to Yugoslavia might be cancelled if the dispute continued.

During the following weeks, the Soviet press reprinted criticism of the Yugoslav program by various Communist parties, ranging from the still fraternal admonitions of the Poles to the bitter attacks of the Chinese. The latter were also first to charge that the Yugoslavs had already engaged in disruptive activities in 1956 by supporting the "traitorous Nagy clique" in Hungary—a charge that came to be repeated in the official indictment published after Imre Nagy's execution in June. On May 27, just as the Chinese party congress was adopting a resolution endorsing the previous press attacks, the Soviet Embassy informed the Yugoslav government of the "suspension" of promised credits; on June 2nd Khrushchev, speaking at the Bulgarian party congress in Sofia, personally endorsed most of the charges being aired as well as the "correctness" of the 1948 anti-Yugoslav resolution—while still talking, almost in the same breath, of the desirability of maintaining "normal" state relations.

THE HISTORY OF this singularly confused campaign seems to justify three conclusions: first, that the Soviet leaders initiated the break with Yugoslavia, despite the hopes Khrushchev had once invested in a *rapprochement*, because they could not persuade the Yugoslav leaders to renounce their "non-bloc" position outside the Warsaw pact, and because the restoration of discipline within the bloc required the condemnation of any ideology which could serve as a justification for "neutralism"; second, that they wished to keep the campaign within the limits of an ideological excommunication, because they were well aware that to bring state pressure on one neutral country might alienate many other neutral countries, particularly in Asia; third, that they were reluctantly driven to adopt measures exceeding their original intention by the pressure of their Chinese allies. The question remains what interest the Chinese Communists could have had in sharpening the conflict; their interest in the cohesion of the bloc, while obvious, cannot explain why their zeal should have exceeded that of the Soviet leaders who were even more immediately concerned.

The answer, in this writer's view, must be found partly in Peking's general interest in heightening rather than relaxing international tension as discussed above, and partly in specific Chinese discontent with the distribution of Soviet credits. According to the best information available, Soviet credits to China have all but petered out since 1956, and the vital deliveries of Soviet and satellite equipment in recent years have been fully paid for.[8] The CPC's decision at its May 1958 Congress to try to achieve a "great leap forward" toward industrialization by developing large numbers of primitive rural plants was a desperate response to China's appalling shortage of capital goods, which had so far limited the pace of industrialization efforts and was leading to growing unemployment in the towns; in this situation the continued granting of Soviet credits to uncommitted nations must have been fiercely resented, and the execution of the credit pledge to the Yugoslav renegades must have seemed unbearable.

[6] E.g., Chen Po-ta's article entitled "Yugoslav revisionism is a product of imperialist policy," in the first issue of *Red Flag*, June 1st, 1958.

[7] In a report by the Lithuanian party secretary Snieckus to his Central Committee, *Sovietskaia Litva*, May 17, 1958.

[8] As quoted from Chinese sources in *Economic Survey for Asia and the Far East*, Bangkok, 1958, p. 103.

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But beyond that the Chinese leaders clearly considered the Yugoslav view that a Communist country could be on friendly terms with the United States as particularly dangerous, because they could not help worrying whether the diplomacy of coexistence might not eventually lead the Soviet leaders to adopt a similar attitude—to the incalculable disadvantage of Communist China. By treating the Yugoslav revisionists not as erring brethren to be led back to the right path, but as bought enemy agents to be discredited and eventually destroyed, the Chinese were seeking deliberately—and not without success—to set a limit on Mr. Khrushchev's efforts to reach an international detente. An indirect confirmation of this hypothesis may be found in the fact that more recently, after Soviet concessions to Chinese pressures for a greater degree of foreign policy coordination and after international tension had been increased through a succession of crises, Mr. Khrushchev has felt free to return to his own preferred methods of fighting the Yugoslav deviation by "ideological struggle," while seeking to promote "friendly relations" between the governments, acknowledging Yugoslav diplomatic support on many issues, and favoring the extension of trade and cultural exchanges.[9]

Taming the Atom or the Dragon?

On the far more central issue of the ending of atomic tests under international control, no similar direct evidence of differences between the Soviet and Chinese attitudes is available. The only possible glimpse is afforded by the fact that on May 11, 1958, the Chinese Foreign Minister Chen Yi stated in an interview that China intended to become a nuclear power, without specifying whether she would do so only with the help of Soviet deliveries or eventually also by her own production.[10] At that time, discussions concerning the Western proposal for a conference of technical experts to examine possibilities of effective control were still in progress; since then, that conference has met and reached positive conclusions, and has been followed by a conference of the three nuclear powers on the diplomatic level.

Considering the failure so far of all Soviet proposals for a "summit meeting" and the breakdown of all disarmament discussions conducted under the aegis of the United Nations, this conference on tests appears at the time of writing as by far the most hopeful outcome to date of "coexistence diplomacy." The obvious fact that agreement on a prohibition of further tests under effective international control would result in a closing of the "nuclear club" constitutes both its main political importance and its main inherent difficulty, as control to be effective would have to be extended to the territory of powers which, having no nuclear arms production yet, are not parties to the present stage of the negotiation. China is one of these.

Now while Peking has not voiced any specific views on the subject so far, the Soviet attitude has shown a striking degree of wavering and inconsistency: its record, in fact, is neither wholly compatible with the assumption that the Soviets are seriously concerned to reach an agreed ban on atomic tests, nor with the opposite assumption that they merely aim to score a propaganda success by putting the Western powers in the wrong. Up to the very opening day of the conference of technical experts, the Soviet government threatened to refuse participation under a threadbare pretext; yet without any change in Western policy, their experts came at the last moment and cooperated constructively in working out the possibilities of control. Again at the political conference, the Soviets started by obstructing any discussion of controls by means of procedural wrangles, while accusing the West of unwillingness to accept any binding obligation on the cessation of tests; yet so far they have shown themselves ready to accept procedural compromises in the end rather than risk complete breakdown.

The result of these contradictory tactics so far has been neither to fulfill nor to destroy the hopes set on the conference by world opinion—including, presumably, Soviet opinion—but to postpone the day when the critical problem of obtaining the agreement of outside parties as a precondition of worldwide control must be faced. It is permissible to wonder whether this is the real purpose of the wrangling, and whether the underlying cause of the inconsistency is that the issue still remains unresolved between the Russians and the Chinese.

The Summit: Ascent and Descent

The link between Russian wavering and Chinese interest has been far more obvious, and has been widely commented upon in the West, in connection with proposals during last summer's Middle Eastern crisis to hold a "summit conference" within the framework of the Security Council of the United Nations.

[9] See Khrushchev's speech at the Soviet-Polish friendship meeting in Moscow, *Pravda*, Nov. 10, 1958.

[10] Published in *Die Welt*, Hamburg, May 12, 1958.

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The assumption that Chinese pressure changed Moscow's view on these proposals was challenged in a previous issue of this journal on the basis of documentary evidence that Chinese and Soviet public statements during the late July phase of the crisis were at no point out of step, and that Mr. Khrushchev started backtracking on his acceptance of Mr. Macmillan's proposal for such a meeting several days before his journey to Peking.[11] Yet this does not alter the fact that the backtracking itself took place under an absurd pretext and is explicable only in terms of Chinese pressure, and that the Peking meeting between Khrushchev and Mao which followed these events in early August resulted in a new Soviet commitment to "all-round coordination" of policy.

Indeed both Mr. Khrushchev's own original proposal for a "summit conference" on the Middle East, including India, and his subsequent acceptance of the British counterproposal to hold such a conference within the framework of a special session of the Security Council, were so clearly injurious to the interests of Communist China that the real problem is what moved him to take these steps at all rather than what caused him to reverse them. The general Soviet campaign for a summit conference had lost most of its original impetus by mid-July, and Mr. Khrushchev must have been fully aware that the West was not going to accept such a conference on terms which amounted to an implicit recognition of the *status quo* of Communist rule in Eastern Europe—which had been his principal purpose in advocating one.

The sudden demand for a summit conference on the Middle East with the inclusion of India was thus not a simple modification of a continuing campaign for "a summit meeting, somehow or other"; it was a panic reaction. There is little doubt that the Allied landings in Lebanon and Jordan (July 15-17) were at first genuinely viewed by the Soviet leaders as preparations for armed intervention against the new Iraqi government; during the first few days, they were, after all, interpreted in this way by a great many non-Communists as well. Yet if that expectation had come true, the Soviets would have been faced with the choice of using force against American troops, with all the risks involved, or appearing impotent in the face of American intervention in a crucial, contested area.

Rather than confront this dilemma Mr. Khrushchev was evidently determined to use every conceivable political pressure to prevent the Western powers from carrying out their supposed intentions while still eschewing military commitments: although he hurried to recognize the new Iraqi government and promised Nasser support in the unlikely event of a Western attack on the United Arab Republic, he sent no "volunteer" fighters and instead issued his appeal for an emergency summit meeting with Indian participation (July 19). When the British counterproposal was made on July 22nd, the danger was not yet over in the Soviet view; it should be remembered that the first Western states to recognize the new Iraqi government acted only on July 30, and Britain and the United States only on August 1 and 2. Even unofficial indications that recognition was intended—the sure sign that the danger feared by Moscow had passed—did not emerge until the London meeting of the Council of the Baghdad Pact on July 28.

THUS KHRUSHCHEV'S decision on July 23rd to accept a Security Council meeting with the interested states, and to suggest July 28 as the date for it, was still made in a crisis atmosphere; the air of hurried improvisation surrounding this decision is attested to by the fact that comment on the British proposal in that morning's *Izvestiia* was still hostile, using the same arguments about the Council's "unrepresentative" character which were being marshaled in China, and that—as it subsequently transpired — Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko had gone (or been sent) on leave at this of all times. Clearly the routine reaction of Soviet diplomacy to the idea of a Security Council meeting was negative, largely out of regard for Communist China's well-known susceptibilities; but the routine was overridden by Mr. Khrushchev's sense of an emergency—or, if you prefer, his panic.

The first preparations for getting out of the commitment to a security council meeting emerged in the Soviet and Chinese press on July 27-28 in the form of warnings against Western "delaying maneuvers," and crystallized in Khrushchev's note of the 29th, rejecting the Western proposal for a meeting of the permanent Security Council representatives to prepare for the special session. Ostensibly, the reason for this rejection was that the Western powers were trying to substitute a routine meeting of the Security Council in place of the special summit session; but this was clearly untrue. The real reasons must have included the growing realization that the acute danger was apparently past, and that at any rate the Council meeting would no longer come in time to make a difference to it; but none of this would have caused Khrushchev to default on a commitment he had already accepted if there had been no positive

[11] See Herbert Ritvo, "Sino-Soviet Relations and the Summit," *Problems of Communism*, No. 5 (Sept.-Oct.), 1958, p. 47.

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reason arguing *against* such a meeting which now, in the changed situation, gained decisive weight—and that positive reason was the interest of his Chinese ally, whom he flew to visit two days later.

THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS had never, so far as is known, objected to the settlement of European questions by four-power conferences; it was the Soviets who had lately begun to object to this forum because they felt that the relation 3:1 in favor of the West no longer corresponded to the realities of power, and also because they wanted to force the West to deal with some of their satellites on major international issues. But the attempt to settle a major crisis on Asian soil by a "concert of powers" including an Asian government other than Peking—be it Delhi or Taipeh—was quite a different matter: it was bound to injure Peking's prestige and to prejudice its diplomatic future. Moreover, the mere fact that it was possible drastically demonstrated to Mao both the dangers of imperfect consultation on Soviet policies, and the risks of leaving the unsolved problems of China's diplomatic status and of Taiwan for too long in a state of quiescence, however comfortable this might be for the Russian allies. He could not, therefore, be content merely to make Khrushchev withdraw from his rash commitment; he had to ensure better consultation and higher priority for his own problems in the formation of joint policies in the future. Hence the need for a conference.

This interpretation is confirmed by the text of the Soviet-Chinese communique of August 3, with its perfunctory demand for "the immediate summoning of a conference of the heads of government of the great powers" (without mention either of India or the Security Council, and with its emphasis that "both parties have decided to ensure the continued all-round development of the comprehensive cooperation between their two countries and to strengthen still further the unity of the socialist camp." The words "all-round coordination," which recur elsewhere in the document, are plainly intended to prevent a repetition of major Soviet improvisations anywhere in the world without advance consultation with Peking; but by the same token, they also prevent Peking from starting a new crisis over Taiwan—which necessarily involves Soviet backing in the game of atomic blackmail—without advance consultation with Moscow. The subsequent launching of the new attack on Quemoy, but also the limitations of that attack, may thus be taken as the first fruits of the "complete identity of views" reached in "all-round discussions" on "the urgent and important problems of the international situation, on further strengthening the relations of friendship, alliance and mutual assistance between the USSR and the Chinese People's Republic, and also on problems concerning the joint struggle for a peaceful settlement of international questions and concerning the safeguarding of world peace." The moving up of the Formosa problem in the scale of Soviet priorities, if only to an extent, is still another reflection of the shift in the balance of power inside the bloc.

Challenge through Strength

So far a number of symptoms have been listed which indicate that such a shift of power has been taking place; yet the question remains, what are the underlying factors which enable the Chinese Communists to exert such effective pressure? After all, their dependence on Soviet military aid and on Soviet bloc industrial equipment is still very great; in case of a major conflict, it would be absolute. How, then, do they manage to influence the foreign policies of the world power on whose support they ultimately depend?

The first condition for a realistic answer is to get the dimensions of the problem in perspective. The Chinese are not "dictating" policy to the Soviets; they are still the junior partner, though a partner which is taken more seriously every year. The impact of their partly divergent interests on Soviet policy is visible, but it remains limited. The Soviets have wavered over the best tactics for dealing with the excommunicated Yugoslavs; they still waver over the prohibition and control of atomic tests; they gave in over the special session of the Security Council on the Middle Eastern crisis when the crisis was all but over; they have backed a limited campaign against Quemoy. The most serious Chinese gain so far is the principle of all-round coordination; which means in essence that the views of Moscow, the more powerful partner, will still prevail most of the time—but not all of the time. In other words, the outcome of any particular disagreement is no longer a foregone conclusion; that is as far as Peking has gotten now.

Within these limits, the shift is to some extent an automatic reflection of the real growth in Chinese power—above all their industrial growth and their increased influence over their Asian neighbors. To some extent it also reflects China's growing power to embarrass the USSR: as Moscow cannot afford to see her one major ally defeated and destroyed, Mao's greater willingness to incur risks of war gives him a power of

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blackmail over his protector. His recklessness may not be as absolute as his propaganda, and some of his private utterances quoted by the Yugoslavs suggest it probably contains an element of bluff.[12] But not even the Soviet leaders can be sure just how large that element is; and when every reasonable deduction has been made, there remains one real factor which must be frightening to the successor of Lenin's successor—the unrelenting determination of a younger revolution, which even now seems to have entered its most extreme utopian phase.

This brings us to what is probably the most important factor of change in the Soviet-Chinese balance: the unbroken authority of Mao Tse-tung, and the determined use he is making of it as an ideological innovator. When that authority was first invoked in the course of 1957 to repair the ideological damage done throughout the Soviet bloc and the Communist movement by Khrushchev's "secret speech," it was unreservedly and willingly thrown in to promote renewed recognition of the "leading role" of the Soviet Union. But while this formula is still being repeated in China on festive occasions like the anniversary of the Bolshevik seizure of power, the revolutionary reorganization of the country on the basis of "people's communes" is by now recognized in both China and Russia as an implicit challenge to the Soviet monopoly of ideological leadership—a claim to the discovery not only of a specific Asian road to "socialism," but of an Asian shortcut to the higher stage of "communism." So far, the Soviet response has been an equally implicit, but unmistakable denial of the claim.

THE "PEOPLE'S COMMUNES" had their origin in the "great leap forward" on which the party congress embarked last spring. The effort to overcome China's desperate shortage of the kind of capital needed for industrialization—a shortage aggravated by the drying up of Soviet credits—through the massive development of primitive rural cottage industries, raised problems of labor rationalization for which the creation of these large militarized units seemed the only solution. In organization and spirit, they consciously hark back to the long tradition of the civil war—to the military communism which was the "mode of production" of a self-sufficient army confined to the countryside.[13]

Both the "leap forward" and the civil war tradition carry distinct overtones of the Chinese Communists' pride in their ability to stand on their own feet, if necessary without Soviet aid. But added to this attitude inherited from the past is a new ideological superstructure: the claim that the partial replacement of wages by the organized distribution of food rations and other necessities in the communes is a step toward the realization of the "higher stage" of communism with its principle, "to each according to his needs." This claim challenges the monopoly of the Soviet Union as the first and so far the only country where the "socialist stage" has been completed and the "transition to communism" has begun.[14] Nor is the challenge unconscious. It is permissible to wonder whether it is an accident that Mao, who in November 1957 had illustrated the Soviet Union's right to sole leadership by remarking that "the Soviet Union has two Sputniks and China has not even a quarter Sputnik," consented last spring to have the first experimental commune named "Sputnik."

In fact, of course, the challenge is based on ideological sleight-of-hand. In the Marxian vision, the Communist stage is based on productive abundance: "to each according to his needs" means according to whatever needs the individual may feel, because society produces enough for all. In Chinese reality, distribution in kind is based on rationing: "to each according to his needs" means according to what ever minimum needs the authorities decide can and must be satisfied. Every army is "Communist" in this sense, and every prison; so was every pharaonic household. The Soviet ideologues, who must be well aware of the trick, have so far carefully refrained from pointing it out. But the Soviet press has given no publicity to the claims, while theoretical articles ostensibly dealing with Soviet problems have explained at length that communism can only be built on the basis of great abundance and advanced technical methods, and "friendly" reports from Soviet correspondents in China have stressed the ingenious use of medieval production techniques in the industrial self-help of the communes.[15] One Soviet party phi-

[12] *Cp.* Tito's reference in his Labin speech to "people who emphasize that 300 million of them would survive a war" (*Borba*, Belgrade, June 16, 1958), which is said by Yugoslav officials to refer to a personal statement of Mao to a leading Yugoslav Communist.

[13] See the NCNA's account of the origin of the "free supply system" in the people's communes, Sept. 29, 1958; also A. Smerdov's "Birth of the People's Commune," in *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, Moscow, Sept. 30, 1958.

[14] See, *e.g.*, "Concerning the Creation of People's Communes in the villages," *People's Daily*, Peking, Sept. 10, 1958; also Soong Ching Ling, "The Socialist Camp in the Present World Situation," *ibid.*, Nov. 7, 1958.

[15] See T. Khachaturov in *Voprosy Ekonomiki*, No. 8, 1958; and *Pravda*, Sept. 26, 1958.

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losopher has already laid down the explicit doctrine that the "socialist" countries of Asia will enter the Communist stage only after the "socialist" countries of Europe.[16]

YET EVEN IF the exuberant ideological claims of the Chinese Communists are left aside, or regarded merely as the paean of triumph accompanying the real achievements of the latest phase of their revolution, there remain two facts of crucial importance for the future of China's position in the world Communist movement. One is that the Chinese Communists, however much their official statistics are to be discounted, are apparently succeeding in quickly increasing both agricultural and industrial output through large-scale labor rationalization and the development of cottage industries—methods which are utterly different from those used during the corresponding phase in Russia, and which are more naturally adapted to the conditions of overpopulated countries with an extreme shortage of capital. The other is that they are doing so, for the time being at least, by using social and ideological techniques which contrast directly with those of both the Stalinist and the present phase of Soviet development. In contrast to Stalinism, they are not relying on the quick creation of new, materially privileged groups, but seek to revive some of the early egalitarian appeal of the revolution; in contrast to present-day Russia, where Khrushchev is systematically replacing payments in kind throughout agriculture by the yardstick of money (in order to promote rational cost accounting as a basis for the steady improvement of output per man[17], the Chinese tend to increase the scope of distribution in kind. The resulting atmosphere is utterly different from that of Soviet society, but far closer than the latter to the utopian dreams that may inspire primitive Communist mass movements elsewhere.

Now it seems highly improbable that the new Chinese concept of communal organization will seriously influence Mr. Khrushchev's ideas about the future development of Soviet collective farms (despite the superficial resemblance between the "people's communes" and the "agro-towns," toward which he is still slowly but steadily driving), or conversely, that Khrushchev's ideas will divert the Chinese Communists from their new road, though experience may cause modification of some utopian excesses: for both policies are rooted in utterly different conditions. But if the two different models continue to "coexist" within the "socialist camp," other ruling Communist parties will be forced to take a choice, and the outcome is likely to be a division on geographical lines. The trend is toward a Chinese ascendancy over Asian communism—and that in its turn must intensify the shift in the Sino-Soviet balance of power and the tensions produced by that shift. For in the long run, the unity of an alliance of totalitarian states requires the ideological unity of the ruling parties, and the latter can only be maintained if the right of a single authority to interpret the ideology in the face of changing conditions and problems is recognized by all. Diplomatic consultation and compromise may be a very effective method for adjusting differences of interest

[16] Ts. A. Stepanyan, "The October Revolution and the Process of Communist Formation," *Voprosy Filosofii*, No. 10, 1958.

[17] The underlying principle of Khrushchev's agricultural reforms has for the first time been explicitly stated by the first secretary himself in his speech to the December plenum of the Central Committee. [See L. Volin's article in this issue.—Ed.]

China's "Sputniks"

各显神通
粮食：我放衛星成群上九霄
高爐：我吐鉄水淹死美国佬

Caption: "Each Doing His Share"
Spirit of food (right): "I sent a group of satellites [i.e., production figures] up to heaven."
Furnace (left): "I spit out iron water to drown the Americans."

—*From Hsin Kuan Cha (New Observer), Peking, November 1, 1958.*

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within an alliance so long as its members agree that their common interests are more important. But if historical experience is any guide, synods and councils are not equally effective in maintaining the doctrinal unity of a Church.

POSTSCRIPT

Since the above was written, the sixth plenary session of the CC of the CPC, held between November 28 and December 10, has marked a new phase in the developments discussed above. The CC communique, published on December 17, shows marked concessions to the Soviet point of view on several of the controversial issues this article has sought to identify. Instead of war hysteria, there is an emphasis that time is on the side of the Communists and that growing decay and divisions among the "imperialists" will permit the maintenance of peace. The "Quemoy crisis," which had been allowed to peter out since the end of October, is quietly buried, and the issue of Taiwan treated as a problem that will be solved by time and the people rather than by outside force. Finally, the danger of international "revisionism" gets no more than one perfunctory reference, and Yugoslavia none at all; in fact the resumption of Sino-Yugoslav trade negotiations was reported at that time.

The most significant change of line, however, is contained in the long and detailed resolution on the "people's communes" adopted by the same plenum. While the essential program of this revolutionary transformation of the Chinese countryside is maintained, the resolution marks a limited but substantial retreat on two fronts—practically, before the Chinese peasants, and ideologically, before Soviet criticism. The practical retreat, dictated by the need to consolidate the new set-up, to train the cadres along unified lines, and to stop wholesale encroachment on the peasant's family life, his small private possessions and his spare time, cannot be discussed here in detail, beyond stating that the comparison drawn in the resolution itself with Stalin's 1930 warning against "dizziness with success" appears convincing; the writer has no means of estimating the severity of the symptoms of discontent and disorganization that may have necessitated this return to realism.

The ideological retreat, on the other hand, is directly relevant to the subject of the present article. It centers in the warning that while there is a connection between the creation of people's communes, the transformation of cooperatives into all-national property, and the transition to communism, these are nevertheless three distinct processes, of which the second will take years longer than the first, and the third a much longer period yet. This amounts to a complete disclaimer of any rivalry with the Soviet Union in the speed of the transition to communism, and a renewed recognition that Russia is so far the only country to complete the construction of "socialism" and to start the transition to the "higher stage"—a claim which constitutes the doctrinal foundation of Russia's "leading role." In addition, the resolution's practical injunctions against a hasty treatment of communal property as state property, against a primitive egalitarianism at a time when skilled cadres are scarce, and against an exaggerated reduction of the (differentiated) money portion of wages in favor of the (equal) rewards in kind, tend to reduce further some of the contrasts in the social atmosphere analyzed above. The resolution even states that in the immediate future, the cash portion of wages will have to grow faster than the "free supply" portion, thus leading to greater differentiation.

Yet, while the resolution accepts a more modest and realistic estimate of the *stage* that China has reached, it maintains the principle of her own original *road* to communism. This applies not only to the essential combination of agriculture and rural industries in the communal units, but also to the "free supply system" itself. If the latter is no longer viewed as an egalitarian shortcut for the immediate transition to communism, it is still valued as a "germ" of Communist relationships to be preserved for another day. This remains in direct contrast to Khrushchev's insistence that there is no road to communism without abundance, no road to abundance without highest productivity, and no road to higher productivity without "the yardstick of the ruble"; and it

Recurrent Vertigo

Because of the big leap forward in production and the victory in setting up communes, some cadres are beginning to get dizzy with success. . . . .

—Resolution of the CC of CPC, Dec. 10, 1958.

. . . successes sometimes engender a spirit of conceit and arrogance: "We can achieve anything!" "We can win hands down!" People are often intoxicated by such successes, they become dizzy with success. . . .

—Stalin, "Dizzy with Success," March 2, 1930.

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therefore remains the "germ" of a concept for a different "Asian road" which may sooner or later be brought to flowering.

Thus, the ideological rift, though far less threatening than before, has not been closed by this latest shift in the balance of power within the Communist alliance—a shift that is for once clearly in Russia's favor. In the writer's view, it is still too early to be definite about the causes of this latest shift. But perhaps two pointers may be worth mentioning. One is that the difficulties caused by the present phase of Mao's "uninterrupted revolution" (a term repeated in the CC resolution) may have increased China's acute dependence on Soviet and Soviet bloc deliveries for the time being, even though the whole transformation is aimed at ultimately reducing that dependence. The other is that Mr. Khrushchev's remarkable success in whipping the Polish Communists back into line on all international and ideological issues has enabled him virtually to abandon the campaign against "revisionism" (in which the Chinese Communists were important, if extremist, allies) and—with a mind to the imminent Twenty-first CPSU Congress—to concentrate his domestic fire against the "dogmatist" resistance to his reforms in the lower levels of the party bureaucracy. The coincidence between the Stalinist doctrine of the transition to communism by distribution in kind, which Mr. Khrushchev is fighting in defense of his agricultural reforms, and the Chinese emphasis on experiments with such distribution, may have caused the First Secretary of the CPSU to give a high priority to dissuading Mao from further ideological encouragement of the rearguard of Stalinism.

One Leap Forward . . .

At the present stage, our task is . . . above all the acceleration of the tempo of socialist construction . . . to prepare for the transition to communism. . . . We must actively use the form of the people's commune and through it find the concrete road of transition to communism.[1]

It is obvious that under the direction of Mao Tse-tung's thought, under the banner of Comrade Mao Tse-tung and at a time when the national economy and culture are developing at such a rate that "twenty years are concentrated in one day," one can visualize the gradual transition of our country from socialism to communism.[2]

. . . the Chinese people have grasped the guiding ideology of the Communist Party's central committee and Comrade Mao Tse-tung on uninterrupted revolution. The working people want no pause in the course of the revolution and they see that the more rapidly the revolution advances, the more benefits they will derive.[3]

. . . generally speaking, the transformation of collective ownership into ownership by the people as a whole is a process that will take three or four years, even five or six years, to complete in the rural areas.[4]

. . . Half a Leap Backward?

From now on, the task confronting the people of our country is . . . to develop the social productive forces at high speed in order to advance the industrialization of the country, the industrialization of the communes, mechanization and electrification of agriculture and to effect the gradual transition from socialist collective ownership to socialist ownership by the whole people. . . . The completion of this whole process will take 15, 20 or more years counting from now. . . .

It should be pointed out that the switch from agricultural production cooperatives to people's communes, the transition from socialist collective ownership to socialist ownership by the people as a whole, and the transition from socialism to communism are processes which are interconnected but are, at the same time, distinct from each other. . . .

How soon the transition from collective ownership to ownership by the whole people will be effected is determined by the objective factors—the level of development of production and the level of the people's political understanding—and not by mere wishful thinking that it can be done sooner or later. Thus, this transition will be realized, by stages and by groups, and on a national scale, only after the lapse of a considerable time.[5]

[1] Resolution of the CC of the CPI, August 29, 1958.
[2] *People's Daily*, September 3, 1958.
[3] *Red Flag, Peking*, August 31, 1958.
[4] *People's Daily*, September 3, 1958.
[5] Resolution of the CC of the CPC, December 10, 1958.

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Khrushchev at the Helm

EDITORS' NOTE: Now that the fatuous references to "collective leadership" have disappeared from the pages of the Soviet press, and now that even Khrushchev's erstwhile comrade-in-arms and travelling companion, Nikolai Bulganin, has been "unmasked" as a bona-fide "enemy of the party," it is worthwhile to pause and survey the broad spectrum of changes that Khrushchev's reign has introduced in the fabric of Soviet society and in the policies of the regime. While it is true that Khrushchev is not another Stalin, there is no doubt that his unchallenged position as the head of the party and the state has enabled him to introduce and force through policies that bear the unmistakable earmarks of his own personal views, tastes, opinions and beliefs on any number of topics, ranging from corn growing to relation with the "capitalist world."

In this issue two areas of Soviet life that have felt the impact of Khrushchev's dynamic and opinionated leadership are closely examined: education and agriculture. The first article discusses the educational reform recently adopted by the Supreme Soviet, tracing its zig-zag history, its ideological implications and its economic, social and demographic rationale. The article on agriculture takes a similar approach to Khrushchev's important programmatic speech of December 15, 1958, dealing with both its historical background and its portents for the future. In forthcoming issues this journal will present further reports on the policies with which Stalin's 65-year-old successor has so closely identified himself.

Upheaval in Education

By Nicholas DeWitt

AFTER TWENTY-FIVE YEARS of relative stability the educational system of the Soviet Union is now in the throes of fundamental reform. Not since the beginning of the era of forced industrialization has Soviet education been subjected to so drastic an overhaul. On the face of it the present reform aims mainly at the structure of primary and secondary schooling and, to a somewhat lesser degree, at specialized secondary and higher professional education. But the real significance of the transformation lies much beyond the structural change. The intent and the likely impact of the reforms force a reconsideration of the fundamental educational principles which communism in Russia has traditionally proclaimed.

Mr. DeWitt is a young American scholar of Russian extraction, presently an Associate of the Russian Research Center, Harvard University. His book *Soviet Professional Manpower—Its Education, Training and Supply*, considered a standard work in the field, and originally published in 1955, will appear in a new edition later this year.

Official Criticism

The recently announced reform of Soviet education has not arrived unheralded. A public debate on the subject, undoubtedly inspired by high authority in the party and government, has been in progress for two years, and during that time various Soviet educators and government officials have come forward with a number of specific proposals. By April 1958, the Central Committee of the Communist Party made known that it was actively

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considering the problems of Soviet education; during the same month, addressing the Thirteenth Congress of the Young Communist League, Premier Khrushchev for the first time clearly articulated official criticism of the existing system.[1] In September Khrushchev's memorandum to the CC Presidium, entitled "On the Strengthening of the Ties Between School and Life and on the Further Development of Public Education in the Country," was "approved" and published.[2] In November a pronouncement bearing the same title was published, together with the new Seven-Year Plan proposals, as a thesis of the Central Committee and the Council of Ministers of the USSR.[3] And before the year was out—in December 1958—the Supreme Soviet approved Mr. Khrushchev's criticism and program, unanimously voting in favor of a sweeping reconstruction of Soviet schooling.[4]

Since he first spoke out on the subject, Mr. Khrushchev has never left any doubt as to the far-reaching extent of the reforms in Soviet education he considered necessary, and the urgency with which he viewed them:

In the work of our schools and higher educational establishments there are fundamental shortcomings . . . We cannot go on like this . . . the time has come to reshape radically the entire system of education for our school youth.[5]

The reasons for his sharp indictment of the Soviet educational system can be found in the critical comments that keep reappearing in the documents mentioned above. According to Khrushchev, the Soviet school is "separated from life . . . and production"; it is "not suited to offer practical education"; it "does not prepare youth for useful labor"; it fails to educate youth morally and to "inculcate the deepest respect for the fundamental principles of socialist society," in which each individual should live by the fruits of his own labor. Instead, the schools are said to breed loafers who express "lordly contempt for labor" and who live at the expense of those who create material and intellectual wealth.[6]

This is surely the most scathing official criticism of Soviet education ever heard in the four decades of its existence, especially in the light of its often-cited achievements in eliminating illiteracy in the Soviet Union, and in training a vast army of skilled workers, specialists, technicians and scientists. The tenor of the criticism—and the general purport of the projected reform—become quite apparent when considered in connection with the circumstances that brought them forth. Both were forged in conjunction with the preparation of the production targets of the Soviet Union's first Seven-Year Plan.[7]

Individual Right *vs.* Social Need

The thesis of the Central Committee concerning the new educational system states:

The Soviet school is called upon to prepare well-rounded, educated individuals who have mastered the foundations of knowledge and who at the same time are capable of systematic physical labor, to instill in the young the desire to be useful to society and to take an active part in producing the values society needs.[8]

In line with this precept the task of the school is defined as a unifying one. Those who study are to be trained in the laboring skills, and those who are already employed are to be aided in improving their existing skills and/or taught additional ones. According to the official dogma, the school, by performing this task, will nurture in every individual the Marxist goal of "complete unity of mental and physical labor," even though, it is added in a more practical vein, "physical labor will not disappear" in a Communist society.[9] The young Soviet generation is to be trained to do physical labor first and foremost.

These utilitarian goals are not new in Soviet education, but the recent emphasis and argumentation are. For the last twenty-five years Soviet spokesmen have maintained that formal education and learning were to be *supplemented* with a familiarity with or participation in laboring pursuits. The 1931 decree of the Party Central Committee, which has served until now as the guiding directive in Soviet education, stated that the "combination of learning and productive labor is to be based on the principle that the entire social and productive labor of the pupil is completely subordinate to the process of learning and upbringing, which is the major task of the school."[10] It is the essence of the present change that social and particularly productive labor are to be in the forefront. The acquisition of a skill and labor participation are put first; formal education and learning assume the supplemental role.

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[1] *Pravda*, April 19, 1958.
[2] *Ibid.*, September 21, 1958.
[3] *Ibid.*, November 16, 1958.
[4] *Ibid.*, December 25, 1958.
[5] *Ibid.*, April 19 and September 21, 1958.
[6] *Ibid*
[7] See "Target Figures for the Development of the National Economy of the USSR for 1959-1965," *ibid.*, November 14, 1958. A special section and several references throughout the report are devoted to educational reform.
[8] *Ibid.*, November 16, 1958.
[9] *Ibid.*
[10] Editorial, *Narodnoe obrazovanie* (Public Education), No. 10, 1955, p. 10.

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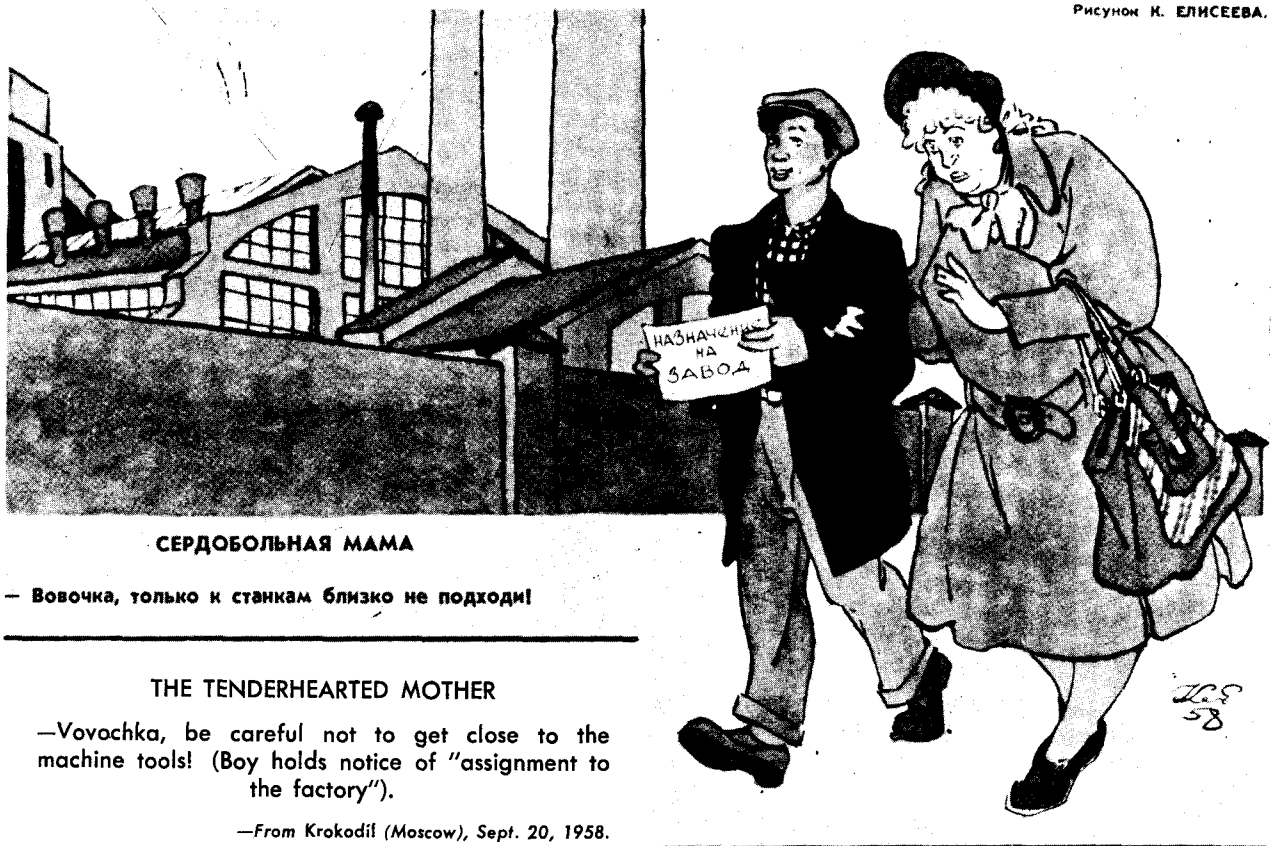
Рисунок К. ЕЛИСЕЕВА.



СЕРДОБОЛЬНАЯ МАМА

— Вовочка, только к станкам близко не подходи!

THE TENDERHEARTED MOTHER

—Vovochka, be careful not to get close to the machine tools! (Boy holds notice of "assignment to the factory").

—From Krokodil (Moscow), Sept. 20, 1958.

In trying to justify the present educational reform some prominent Soviet educational authorities go even a step further. Stating that in the past, "learning . . . and the acquisition of knowledge . . . were erroneously identified . . . as being identical with the all-sided development of the individual," they maintain that such development will in fact be achieved by the introduction of labor training and the general integration of the school into diversified vocational training and production activities." [11] Thus the redefinition of educational objectives is made almost exclusively in terms of labor activity.

Perhaps the main task facing the regime is to effect this new emphasis and to redefine the tasks of Soviet education without seeming to abandon the traditional Marxist goal of Communist education—the all-sided development of the individual *up to the limit of his intellectual capacity*. One of the chief sources of the present predicament has been Article 121 of the 1936 "Great Stalin Constitution," proclaiming every Soviet citizen's "right to education," and enumerating the educational facilities available in the Soviet Union which ostensibly guaranteed that right (this article has been amended in line with the reform, as will be discussed). The constitutional commitment of the regime to education fired the imagination of the Soviet people, for more than anything else it seemed to assure a means of betterment for themselves and their children.

There was more than an article in the Constitution to feed their hopes. In technical Marxist disquisitions many Soviet writers repeatedly claimed that in education, just as in any other sphere of social life, the prevailing laws — including Article 121 — were a reflection of the objective conditions in the society, and that therefore objective factors such as unlimited employment opportunities, economic resources, teachers, educational facilities, *etc.*, allowed every Soviet citizen to receive an education of his own choosing and up to the limit of his ability. Only in a socialist society, it was said, did such socio-economic preconditions exist, and as the Soviet Union was such a society, the aims of its educational system, as expressed in its constitution, were consistent and fully attainable.

The recent debate on Soviet education and the reinterpretation of its aims bear testimony that these claims are in conflict with reality. The fact is that even under the most favorable conditions the unlimited educational development of each and every citizen would constitute

[11] N. Goncharov and A. Leontev "Education in the second Stage of Secondary Education Should Be Differentiated," *Pravda*, November 21, 1958. Academician Goncharov is Vice-President of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of the RSFSR and his co-author is a member of the Presidium.

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a contradiction to another basic thesis of socialism, namely, that a socialist society is a *planned* society and as such operates a planned economy which in turn requires a certain desirable or optimal combination of human skills. It follows that the socialist planners are not free to let the "right" of each individual to develop his ability to the limit become fully operational. This restraint is part and parcel of the Soviet educational system with its regulation of programs, specialization, enrollment quotas, and all the restrictions necessary for the channeling of individual talent into particular educational slots. Thus the "right" is subordinated to other planning considerations, with the net result that the educational system of a socialist state acquires exclusively functional attributes. Certain individuals may indeed develop their abilities if these are not contrary to the planners' preferences. But here the "right" ends and the conflict begins.

These considerations are fundamental to our understanding of the current educational scene in the USSR. The dilemma of the Soviet leaders lies in their efforts to meet the requirements of socio-economic planning while remaining ostensibly true to the traditional educational ideal.

Demographic Trends and the Labor Force

The most striking feature of the educational debate has been its virtual avoidance of any statistical data—a most unusual phenomenon, given the Soviet proclivity for buttressing its propaganda with abundant and impressive statistics. Yet even a quick glance at school enrollment trends during the last ten years would reveal the forces which are in great part responsible for the present turmoil in Soviet education—chief among them, the unfavorable demographic trend. Official silence on this score can only be explained by the desire to camouflage the *real* aims and causes of the current educational upheaval.

According to official estimates, the Soviet population increased only 8 million (from ca. 192 to 200 million) between 1940 and 1956;[12] had it not been for World War II, the figure would have been 30 to 40 million larger. The deficit in births and increased rate of infant and child mortality during the war years are now showing up in the school population figures, and in the next few years will affect the working-age population as well. While no official population census has been taken for two decades (though one is now in progress), the Central Statistical Administration has revealed fairly

[12] *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1956 godu* (National Economy of the USSR in 1956), Moscow, 1957, p. 17.

CHART I

Soviet Ten-Year School Enrollment: 1940, 1948-58 *

(in millions)

Year's End	*Grades 1-4*	*Grades 5-7*	*Grades 8-10*	*Annual Total*
1940	21.4	10.7	2.4	34.5
1948	23.7	6.7	1.0	31.4
1949	22.7	9.3	1.1	33.1
1950	19.7	12.0	1.5	33.2
1951	16.4	13.5	2.4	32.3
1952	13.4	14.1	3.3	30.8
1953	12.1	13.5	4.5	30.1
1954	12.6	11.6	5.2	29.4
1955	13.6	9.3	5.2	28.1
1956	15.6	7.4	5.0	28.0
1957	17.5	6.9	4.0	28.4
1958	19.0	6.2	3.5	28.7

* *Sources for these figures are listed in footnote 13.*

comprehensive statistics on school enrollment by level of grades. Chart I on this page shows Soviet enrollment statistics for 1940 and 1948-58 in the 10-year school, differentiated by the three grade levels of elementary (1-4), intermediate (5-7), and upper (8-10).[13] Enrollment in 1940 represents the last normal prewar year which can be compared with the trend during the last ten years.

The data in the chart reveal that in the course of the six years 1948-53 enrollment in elementary grades 1-4, which normally accomodate pupils aged 7 through 11, has been cut in half by the population deficit. Starting in 1953 this deficit began to affect the enrollment in intermediate grades 5-7, and since 1956 enrollment in upper grades 8-10 has also begun to fall off. The decline in enrollment in the intermediate and upper grades took place despite a forceful drive to extend secondary schooling.

An examination of enrollment trends suggests the following: The population of 18-year-olds—who constitute the primary age group of those who enter the Soviet labor force, the armed forces, or institutions of higher

[13] Enrollment trends from: *Kulturnoe stroitelstvo SSSR* (Cultural Construction of the USSR), Moscow, 1956; pp. 122-23; *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR* (National Economy of the USSR), Moscow, 1956, p. 229; and *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR v 1956 godu*, p. 240. All figures are approximations. The 1957 and 1958 figures are estimated on the basis of RSFSR statistics in *Uchitelskaia gazeta*, April 3, 1958, and *Kulturnoe stroitelstvo RSFSR* (Cultural Construction of the RSFSR), Moscow, 1958, esp. pp. 204-05.

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learning—began to decline in 1957. It will continue to fall, taking a drastic dip in 1961 or 1962 and reaching a low of perhaps half the number (about 2 million or less) of this age group in the early 1950's. What the actual numbers of 18-year-olds will be can be predicted only when and if the Soviet government releases the results of the current census of the population. As the slight increase in elementary-grade enrollment in 1957 suggests, only by 1967 can some improvement in the supply of 18-year-olds be anticipated. Not even then will the prewar or early 1950 contingents of 18-year-olds be restored.

On the basis of these statistics, it is possible to estimate specifically that the deficit of young people in the age group 18-24 during the next seven years (*i.e.*, during the period of the proposed Seven-Year Plan, 1959-65) will be about 14 million, and probably more. This deficit means that there will be a growing need for unskilled and skilled manpower, which will have to be met regardless of the requirements of formal education.

The regime's solution for alleviating this pressing manpower shortage is to cut down on the number of school years with required attendance, so as to permit youngsters in the age group 15 to 18 to enter the active labor force instead of remaining in school, and at the same time to foster some sort of part-time rather than full-time study in all segments of the educational system beyond the age of 15, so as to provide specialized training without diminishing the labor force. These are the basic points of the educational reform, although the demographic reasons behind it are not officially revealed.

The Drive for Universal Secondary Education

Another fundamental factor bearing upon enrollment trends and the current reform is the drive for universal secondary education. The Soviet regime has always professed a commitment to this goal, first set forth in a Bolshevik declaration of March 1918 that "*free* and *compulsory general* and *polytechnical* education for children of both sexes up to the age of 17" was to be introduced.[14] Almost forty years passed before the multiple conditions of this original objective assumed the shape of a real possibility on the horizon—when the Twentieth CPSU Congress of February 1956 proposed the introduction of "universally available" (though not compulsory) secondary education by 1960 and the "completion of transition to polytechnical education" in the primary and secondary schools.[15]

The intermediate history preceding this decision is important to an understanding of the current reform. In 1931, at about the time when the currently existing 10-year-school system was being developed as a standard of schooling for the entire country, Soviet authorities set forth the principle of eventual compulsory education for all up to the age of 18, but at that time made only the first four years of school, that is elementary grades 1-4, compulsory. By 1938, when the Third Five-Year Plan was being inaugurated, the Soviet government claimed to have accomplished universal 7-year education and proposed transition to 10-year universal education by 1942; however, it was not until 1949 that 7-year education was actually decreed "compulsory." It was announced in Khrushchev's 1958 memorandum that in recent years, even if repeaters are counted, only 80 percent of those who enter the first grade actually succeed in completing the seventh.[16] Of these, only 70 percent elect to continue their education on to the eighth grade. Thus, only about 55 percent of those who start school actually enter the eighth grade.

These latterday facts notwithstanding, the Nineteenth CPSU Congress in 1952 proclaimed that 7-year education had been "universally achieved," and the drive to introduce "universally available" 10-year education (of a polytechnical nature) was then inaugurated. The same goal, as noted, was reiterated by the Twentieth Congress (1956).

The present educational reform constitutes a retreat from this position, proposing only eight years of compulsory education. This time, however, it is said that the goal is to be "effectively enforced." Whether this will be done more efficiently than in the past still remains to be seen.

The drive to expand secondary schooling for the many, limited as its success may have been, resulted, however, in a several-fold increase in enrollment in the upper grades during the early 1950's. This expansion meant that each year a greater proportion of youth in the age group 14-17 remained in school. It is clear that if the commitment to universal secondary education were permitted to stand, the results would be diametrically opposed to the need for accelerated additions to the labor force. For the time being at least, the conflict

[14] *KPSS v resoliutsiiakh i resheniiakh sezdov, konferentsii i plenumov TsK* (CPSU in Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses, Conferences and Plenums of the Central Committee), Moscow, 1954, Vol. 1, p. 419.

[15] *Direktivy XX sezda KPSS po shestomu piiatiletnemu planu razvitiia narodnovo khoziaistvo SSSR na 1956-60 gody* (Directives of the Twentieth CPSU Congress concerning the Sixth Five-Year Plan of the Development of the National Economy of the USSR in 1956-60), Moscow, 1956.

[16] *Pravda*, September 21, 1958.

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has been resolved by abandoning even the professed intention of making secondary education universal and compulsory for all youths up to the age of 17 or 18.

The Predicament of Graduates

The policy of expanding schooling to accommodate a greater number of pupils in the upper grades of the Soviet 10-year school, the quest of Soviet youth for education supported by official propaganda, and the easing, particularly from 1954 on, of academic requirements have resulted in a rapid growth in the size of graduating classes. While tenth-grade graduates in the period prior to 1950 constituted less than 8 percent of those who had entered the first grade, by 1956 about *one-third* of those who had entered school a decade earlier graduated. In both 1957 and 1958 the number of 10-year-school graduates was about 1.3 million,[17] which is almost a six-fold increase over the number graduated in 1950.

The growing disparity between the annual flow of secondary-school graduates and the annual acceptances for the regular course of study (day and evening, excluding extension-correspondence) in higher education, is evident on the basis of the data in Chart II.[18] Prior to 1950 every graduate of the Soviet 10-year school had a very good chance of being accepted in Soviet higher educational institutes. In 1950 the 10-year schools graduated about 220,000, while that year's acceptances in regular higher educational establishments were 240,000. In the following few years the situation altered profoundly: by 1956 there were 1.2 million tenth-grade graduates, but acceptances in regular higher education rose only to 260,000. In other words, the ratio of 10-year-school graduates to entry quotas in higher education rose from less than one-to-one in 1950 to five-to-one in 1956. The situation has worsened since, for every year the backlog of those desiring further education has continued to mount. It is now apparent that the planners are unwilling to expand professional education of the regular type for some time to come. It has been announced that the admission quotas for full-time study in these institutions will be kept at the 225,000 level for the next few years.[19]

The predicament of the ten-year-school graduates is further aggravated by the fact that upon graduation the majority of them are unsuited for immediate employment; their curriculum has been oriented toward further professional education and they have no skills or vocational training. In order to deal with this situation the Soviet authorities have taken recourse in recent years to a set of accommodative measures. One has been to enroll students in extension-correspondence courses which offer specialized training for the branch of economy in which they find jobs; another to expand and reform the technicums by shortening their programs to two years or less and thus, in effect, to convert them into junior vocational colleges; still another was the founding, in 1954, of new technical schools (*tekhnicheskie uchilishcha*) for the specific purpose of training 10-year-school graduates for skilled industrial occupations.

Finally, there is the most direct accommodative policy of organized job placement in industrial and agricultural enterprises. As their numbers have kept increasing, the 10-year-school graduates who have not been accepted in institutions of higher learning have found it even more difficult to find employment. The explanation is simple enough. Most of them are 17 years old and as such they work two hours per day less than regular employees. They have to be taught a trade. By the time they have learned it they often reapply for university

[17] *Molodoi kommunist* (Young Communist), February 1958, No. 2, p. 109.

[18] Actual figures and estimates were derived from *Kulturnoe stroitelstvo SSSR*, p. 203, 212-13; *Narodnoe khoziaistvos SSSR*, p. 234; *Naradnoe khozyaistvo SSSR v 1956 godu*, p. 246; estimates of number of 10-year-school graduates derived by using the same technique as in DeWitt, *Soviet Professional Manpower*, pp. 273-74. Estimates for 1957 and 1958 acceptances are from *Vestnik Vysshei Shkoly*, 1957, No. 9, p. 3; *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, July 4, 1958; *Pravda Ukrainy*, August 19, 1958. The figures for 1957 and 1958 10-year-school graduates are from *Pravda*, December 20, 1957.

[19] *Pravda*, September 21, 1958.

CHART II

Supply of Ten-Year School Graduates Compared to Higher Educational Admissions: 1940, 1950-58 *

(in thousands)

Year	Graduates**	Admissions***
1940	285	160
1950	220	237
1951	260	255
1952	315	260
1953	440	282
1954	750	300
1955	1,000	286
1956	1,200	264
1957	1,270	225
1958	1,340	210

* *Sources for these figures are listed in footnote 18.*

** *Estimated number of graduates from the regular ten-year schools only.*

*** *Estimated number of first-year admissions to higher educational establishments.*

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study, and if admitted, leave their work. From the production manager's point of view, these youths are not worth the trouble of training for the job, and he refuses to hire them if he can.[20]

In order to cope with this situation "committees on job placement" (*komitety po trudoustroistvu*) were formed in 1954 in city and regional soviets. These committees place the students in jobs (usually apprenticeships) which are held in reserve (*bron*) for this purpose by individual enterprises. In fact some enterprises are now compelled to hire a certain quota of secondary school graduates, and it has been proposed in connection with the school reform that the State Planning Commission work out plans with the Regional Economic Councils for the job placement of youths.[21]

The paradoxical situation in which a rapidly developing manpower squeeze exists side-by-side with a surplus of secondary school graduates unable to find appropriate occupation is not hard to explain. On the one hand, the demand for labor in the Soviet Union, as in any other industrialized state, is highly differentiated. On the other hand, the notion propagated in the last three decades that the right to education automatically entitles one to social betterment has made the supply of manual labor increasingly inelastic. The problem is being resolved by subordinating the interests of education and the aspirations of a large segment of the young generation to the pressing demands of the economy. There is further clear evidence of this decision in the new restrictive measures designed to shore up the institutions of higher learning against the rising flood of applicants.

The main intent of recent regulations issued by the Ministry of Higher Education is to deter the 10-year-school graduate from proceeding to higher education immediately upon graduation (through preferential admissions clauses); to restrict admissions generally by raising acceptance standards; and to insure political orthodoxy in the universities by a new rigorous process of screening applicants. This restrictive drive was initiated in 1955, with increasingly drastic revisions of the regulations following from year to year. The last rules were announced in June 1958.[22] They decree that 80 percent of the vacancies in schools of university level are to be reserved for veterans and those who have had two or more years of employment. All applicants (including silver and gold medalists and graduates of technicums, who before 1955 were granted free entry to institutions of higher learning) are now to be subjected

Caption: **The entrance exams have begun . . .**
Wall Sign: **Dean of the Faculty**

—From Krokodil, *June 30, 1958.*

to competitive entrance examinations.[23] Finally, the admission commissions are to include party, Komsomol and trade union representatives, who are to consider socio-political recommendations *(kharakteristika)* on applicants submitted by their former places of employment.

Khrushchev's pronouncements and the documents dealing with the school reform place particular emphasis on this last regulation, holding that party and Komsomol representatives not only should sit on the admission boards, but should insist on a firm voice in choosing applicants. Besides assuring political screening this measure is designed to eliminate alleged abuses in admission procedures. The primary target here is what Khrushchev calls the "competition of parents," namely the ability of influential people to force acceptance of their offspring without regard to their qualifications (see cartoon on this page). The Soviet premier revealed in this connection that in institutions of higher learning in Moscow only about 30 to 40 percent of the students are descendants of workers and collective farmers; the rest are sons of white collar employees and the intelligentsia. The screening regulations and the forced detour into the labor force before entering higher education are designed to alter this situation, at the same time dis-

[20] *Ibid.*
[21] *Ibid.*
[22] *Sovetskaia Rossiia,* June 4, 1958.

[23] "Silver medalists" are 10-year-school graduates with "excellent" grades in most subjects and no grades below "good." "Gold medalists" are graduates with "excellent" grades in all subjects.

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ciplining those youths "who contend that they have the hands of a fine lady *(beloruchki)*, unfit for physical labor." [24]

The Road to Secondary School Reform

As earlier noted, the piecemeal adjustment of the general education schools to the requirements of the economic planners began back in 1952, when the Nineteenth CPSU Congress decreed the adoption of polytechnical secondary education, evoking the long-ignored Leninist concept of a "unity of theory and practice"—*i.e.*, academic education supplemented by manual and applied-skill training. Although a number of conferences were held and many resolutions passed, the adjustment of the 10-year-school curriculum to the new directives was slow. Not until June 1955 was a new program introduced, the major innovations of which were the introduction of manual labor in grades 1-7 and of shop work and classroom study on the principles of production in grades 8-10, as well as a generous allotment of time for student excursions to production enterprises.[25]

This program was soon adjudged unsatisfactory. At the Twentieth Congress in February 1956, Soviet schools were criticized for not giving "sufficient preparation for practical activity," [26] and there was complaint that the goals of polytechnical education remained poorly implemented. A Congress directive called for polytechnical education of such a type as to ensure skilled training and direct participation in the labor process. There was, however, no overall indictment of the schools and no call for the abandonment of the 10-year system of schooling.

As a result of these criticisms the program was again revised in May 1956. The new plan was called "experimental," and in 1956-57 was used in only about 500 schools; but by 1957-58 about one-quarter of all schools had switched over to it.[27] The program added fall and spring practice work in grades 5 and 6, and summer employment "practice" assignments (of three to five weeks) after grades 8 and 9. It increased manual training for grades 3 through 5 and the study of production fundamentals in grades 8-10.

In April 1957 the summer work assignment (particularly to rural areas) for pupils in grades 5, 6, 8 and 9 was made compulsory, even in those schools which were not as yet operating on the 1956 "experimental" program. In December of the same year it was announced that fifty 11- and 12-year experimental schools would be set up in the Russian Republic, with programs which would require students in the upper grades to work and to study three days each a week. Finally, some schools (particularly in the Ukraine) introduced subjects designed to develop vocational or trade skills, introducing electives ranging from courses for lathe operators and tractor drivers to sewing and home economics.

Despite these many attempts at adjustment, the central problem of Soviet schooling was not being satisfactorily resolved. On the one hand the official principle remained that of uniformity and standardization of the entire educational system. On the other, practical considerations compelled the Soviet leadership to introduce considerable diversity not only in various vocational establishments but also in general secondary schools. The question inevitably arose whether the considerations favoring diversity did not apply to secondary schooling in *toto*, and thus whether doctrine should be jettisoned in favor of practicality.

This is precisely what *did* happen in early 1957. At that time, the Academy at Pedagogical Sciences of the Russian Republic came forward with a proposal for a 15- to 20-year plan of educational development, the chief novelty of which was the abandonment of uniformity in secondary schooling.[28] It proposed that a 12-year educational system for all children aged 6 to 18 be established, with compulsory and uniform education in the first eight years and a program of universal, though not compulsory, education based on "furcation" — that is, multi-track education — in the upper grades. The lowering of the entrance age from 7 to 6 would constitute a conversion of 7-year to 8-year uniform schooling. The program for the upper grades (9-12) proposed to start with three tracks: (1) physical-mathematical and technical; (2) biological and agricultural; and (3) socio-economic and the humanities—with the possibility of further split within each track through the introduction of selectives. Thus *"furkatsiia."* which for three decades had been looked upon

[24] *Uchitelskaia gazeta*, April 26, 1958 (article by the Minister of education of the RSFSR, A. Afanesko).

[25] The pre-1955 curriculum is in DeWitt, *Soviet Professional Manpower*, p. 275. For the 1955 curriculum see E. N. Medynskii, *Prosveshchenie v SSSR* (Education in the USSR), Moscow, 1955, p. 84.

[26] N. S. Khrushchev, *Otchetnyi doklad TsK* (The Report of the Central Committee), pamphlet of a speech at the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, Moscow, 1956, p. 94.

[27] *Narodnoe Obrazovanie v SSSR* (Public Education in the USSR), Moscow, 1957, pp. 93-95.

[28] I. K. Goncharov, "Prospective Plan for the Development of Popular Education in the USSR in the Course of the Next 15-20 Years," *Sovetskaia pedagogika* (Soviet Pedagogy), No. 4, 1957, pp. 10-25.

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with contempt as a "bourgeois education device" discriminating against the masses of toilers,[29] was now endorsed as a positive educational concept. The proposal further suggested that vocational schools, in which youths were to be accepted after the completion of eighth grade, would add still more diversity to the system, which nevertheless—by some magic trick of semantics—was still to be called "unified."

While this proposal envisioned flexibility and diversification, its cardinal tenet still remained that of retention of the goal of education for everyone up to the age of 18. For a while it seemed as if the proposal would be accepted, even though Khrushchev spoke ominously, in his speech at the Komsomol Congress in April 1958, of the need to put "everyone without exception . . . to work upon the completion of schooling." [30]

Towards the end of that year, however, it became apparent that not even this proposal was satisfactory to the Soviet leadership. In the August 25th issue of *Pravda*, G. Zelenko, head of the Chief Administration of the Labor Reserve, announced that his agency had prepared a plan of prospective requirements for skilled and semi-skilled labor for the period of the Seven-Year Plan (1959-65). He stated that vocational skills would be in heavy demand, and that vocational and labor reserve training should therefore be intensified as the only logical component of an educational system which prepares people for actual jobs. Two weeks later in an article in *Komsomolskaia Pravda* (September 10) he argued that for all practical purposes secondary schooling had outlived its usefulness, that it was high time to start training young workers in an expanded system of vocational schools and on the job, and that this should be the main task of the educational reform.

Educators from the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences were quick to retort that what Zelenko was advocating was in fact "the complete abolition of the secondary school as an institution." [31] Indeed, this was Zelenko's admitted point, although he sanctioned the existence of other schools for youths especially gifted in mathematics, physics and physical and natural sciences, and the arts. In effect he was advocating part-time schooling (evening and extension) as the most suitable general substitute for the existing system.

The idea of special schooling for gifted students is a revolutionary aspect of this debate. Khrushchev and others made mention of it in the spring of 1958 and even before. The heresy of the proposal in the context of the educational philosophy which prevailed for several decades in the Soviet Union is indisputable. It admits the concept of inborn ability or aptitude, which has been anathema to Soviet education since the days of the revolution. How these extraordinary abilities are to be identified and how pupils of this type are to be chosen are problems which could lead to a "competition of parents" far more intensive than that which Khrushchev has just condemned. In fact Soviet educators have already expressed concern that schools for gifted children might invite influence-pulling and held that the idea of special schools aimed at the exclusiveness of a "Wunderkind" is alien in spirit to the proposed reform.[32]

The New School System

While debate on details of the school reform is still going on, its basic thesis and program have now become the law of the land: On December 25, 1958, after several hours of speeches, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR rubber-stamped most of Khrushchev's proposals (with minor changes), and amended Article 121 of the USSR Constitution in accordance with the reform (see box on page 34). The main provisions of the law, as published in *Pravda* of the same date, are as follows: All youths aged 15 to 16 are to be integrated into socially useful labor according to individual capability, and "all education thereafter is to be carried out in conjunction with productive labor in the national economy;" this is to be accomplished by intensification of vocational instruction in the lower-level schools, expansion of part-time schooling on the secondary level, and the sandwiching of extensive periods of full-time employment into the programs of specialized and higher education. The task of reorganizing the system of schools and their curricula has been delegated to the various Ministries of Education of the Soviet republics; the program is to be effected in part by next fall, and in full within three to five years.

While it is still too early to tell what the ultimate shape of the new system will be, the following conclusions can be drawn: It is evident, first of all, that in the new structure the major component will be the compulsory 8-year school, which will replace the present (primary and junior secondary) 7-year school. This will be called "first stage schooling" and it is intended to be

[29] See "Furkatsiia" in *Bolshaia sovetskaia entsiklopediia* (Large Soviet Encyclopedia), Vol. 45, p. 661.

[30] *Uchitelskaia gazeta*, April 19, 1958.

[31] A. Arsenev, "The Paths of Secondary Education," *Komsomolskaia pravda*, September 17, 1958.

[32] *Sovetskaia Kirgiziia*, October 8, 1958; *Pravda*, November 25, 1958.

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terminal. For the majority of youngsters, secondary schooling will be a part-time venture which will have to be combined with full-time employment either directly upon the completion of the 8-year school or after some training in vocational labor schools. The amalgam of part-time secondary schools, vocational labor schools, specialized secondary schools, and special schools for gifted children will comprise "second stage schooling" of three to four years' duration. All these schools will have a vocational or skill orientation, and students will be studying while holding a job. The exception will be made for gifted children, but their number is expected to be small—anywhere from 5 to 8 percent of the 8-year school graduates. How they are to be selected nobody has yet suggested. Among schools for the gifted, those offering training for children excelling in mathematics and the natural sciences will predominate. Graduates of these schools will be allowed to proceed directly to higher education without prior employment.

Higher education will be reorganized as well. The first two or three years of study (except for those coming directly from schools for the gifted) will invariably be made a part-time affair, and only after the student has proved his sincere desire to continue, has shown special ability, and, most of all, has proved that he is "deserving" of higher education, will he be permitted to continue on a full-time basis. And apparently Komsomol, party and trade-union organizations are to play an increasingly important role in deciding who the "deserving" and "sincerely dedicated" students are.

One can only guess as to the content of the new curricula, but it is certain that mathematics, science and applied-vocational studies will not be sacrificed. While these pursuits may be emphasized as a shining example of the excellence of education under communism, it seems equally certain that the proposed reform will push the humanities and the social sciences into further oblivion. Only a few small voices have been heard in their defense.[33] As the Pasternak affair so aptly demonstrated, the scales are tipped way off balance.

The probable impact of the reform is very hard to assess at this point. Unquestionably there will be chaos at first. Already there are some who say that certain students should be allowed to continue according to the program in existence now, while others are for switching all students over to the new program at once. The teachers will have to be restrained or at least reoriented in order to tackle the new curricula, whatever their shape. Out of this turmoil, the only victory that emerges so far is that of the industrial managers, who will be able to count on an increased flow of young and fresh labor which they can mold, particularly through the labor reserve system of schools, to suit their own needs.

The proposed educational reform is firmly linked with the issue of the further development of Soviet society and Soviet power. If the USSR is to continue to grow as rapidly as its leadership desires, its technology must be further improved. Its army of scientists, engineers and technologists must be expanded. The quality of its labor must be further refined. And to accomplish this, Soviet education is being called upon to perform a specific, functional task required by the national economy. The age-old issue of education—what kind and what for—is again being resolved *not* in favor of the individual but in favor of the Soviet state.

[33] *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, November 19, 1958; and particularly "V zabvenii" (In Oblivion), *Uchitelskaia gazeta*, June 12, 1958.

MAKING THE SHOE FIT?
(Article 121 of the USSR Constitution)

As adopted in 1936:

Citizens of the USSR have the right to education. This right is ensured by universal compulsory seven-year education; by extensive development of secondary education; by free education in all schools, higher as well as secondary; by a system of state grants for students of schools of higher education who excel in their studies; by instruction in schools being conducted in the native language; and by the organization in the factories, state farms, machine and tractor stations, and collective farms of free vocational, technical and agronomic training for the working people.

As amended in 1958:

Citizens of the USSR have the right to education. This right is ensured by universal compulsory eight-year education; by extensive development of secondary general polytechnical education, vocational-technical education, secondary specialized and higher education, based on the principle of the tie between education and life and production; by extensive development of evening and extension-correspondence education; by free education in all schools; by a system of state grants; by instruction in schools being conducted in the native language; and by the organization in the factories, state farms, machine and tractor stations, and collective farms of free vocational, technical and agronomic training for the working people.

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Reforms in Agriculture

By Lazar Volin

THE DEEP CONCERN of the present occupants of the Kremlin with the problems of Soviet agriculture has once again been forcefully underscored by Premier Nikita Khrushchev, this time in a lengthy report delivered at the recent Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee in Moscow on December 15, 1958. Speaking with the authority of one whose influence on Soviet agriculture considerably antedated his rise to power in the post-Stalin period, Khrushchev reiterated the deficiencies and shortcomings in agriculture that were part of Stalin's legacy, lauded the successes achieved in the past five years toward overcoming them, acknowledged however that there are lingering difficulties, and presented a program for a further "upsurge of socialist farming" throughout the land.[1]

Of course, whenever he has discussed the flaws in Soviet agriculture, Khrushchev has carefully avoided any implication that they might have arisen from the nature of the Soviet system. Instead, he has laid chief blame for the ailments of the past at Stalin's door, as in this passage from his not-so-secret "destalinization" speech of February 1956—stressing, by implication, the antithesis between his own and Stalin's leadership:

All those who interested themselves even a little in the national situation saw the difficult situation in agriculture, but Stalin never even noted it. Did we tell Stalin about this? Yes, we told him, but he did not support us. Why? Because Stalin never traveled anywhere, did not meet city and kolkhoz workers; he did not know the actual situation in the provinces. He knew the country and agriculture only from films. And these films had dressed up and beautified the existing situation in agriculture. Many films so pictured kolkhoz life that the tables were bending from the weight of turkeys and geese. Evidently, Stalin thought that it was actually so. . . . The last time he visited a village was in January 1928, when he visited Siberia in connection with grain deliveries. How then could he have known the situation in the provinces?[2]

The device of fixing the blame for failures on scapegoats is, of course, an old and familiar Soviet practice. (In his recent report, Khrushchev seized the occasion to accuse Malenkov and the "anti-party group" in general of obstructing his policies of agricultural reform.) Regardless, however, of the extent to which Stalin personally may have been responsible, it is an uncontestable fact that one of the most urgent economic problems which confronted his successors was the seriously lagging state of Soviet agriculture, and especially the livestock sector, compared to industry.

From the very outset, therefore, the post-Stalin leadership as a whole, and Khrushchev in particular, made it their central objective in the economic sphere to increase agricultural production as sharply and rapidly as possible. To achieve this purpose, the leadership has since pursued a consistently vigorous policy. First, it has made, or carried further, certain changes in the institutional structure of Soviet agriculture. Second, greater stress has been laid on providing economic incentives to the peasants in order to increase the quantity and improve the quality of labor input. Third, the state procurement and pricing system for agricultural produce has been simplified. Fourth, capital investments in agriculture and the input of fertilizers have been stepped up. Fifth, Soviet agriculture has been unshackled to a considerable extent from the fetters of Lysenko's quack plant-breeding theories, and at the same time the influence of economists and economic concepts on policy-making has become increasingly evident. Sixth and last, the regime has embarked upon a number of specific agricultural programs: notably, the development of grain cultivation on new

[1] *Pravda*, December 16, 1958.

[2] Khrushchev's "secret" speech on Stalin of Feb. 25, 1956, published in translation in *The Anti-Stalin Campaign and International Communism*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1956, p. 1-89.

One of the foremost American experts on Soviet agriculture, Mr. Volin is author of *A Survey of Soviet Russian Agriculture* (Washington, D. C., 1951) and other works. His article is adapted from a paper delivered at the annual meeting of the American Economic Association, held in Chicago, Ill., on December 27, 1958.

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lands, involving a considerable increase in the total sown acreage; the corn program; and moves to expand the livestock industry. Some of the most significant aspects of these measures will be examined in the following pages.

The Trend toward "Gigantism"

To begin with the institutional structure, it is well to note at the start that at no time since Stalin's death has there been, in the Soviet Union, any move toward "decollectivization," such as occurred—at least temporarily—in some other countries of the Soviet bloc. On the contrary, the drive to merge the collectives into still bigger "supercollectives," which was masterminded from the beginning by Khrushchev in the last years of Stalin's rule, has continued. (Only recently, in fact, it was reported that Khrushchev had advised the "model" collective in his native village of Kalinovka, already with a tillable area of 3,200 acres, to merge with another.) As a result of the merger campaign, the total number of collective farms decreased from more than 250,000 at the beginning of 1950 to 97,000 at the end of 1952, and has since dropped still further to less than 80,000 at the present time. The average sown area per collective has increased accordingly: in 1956 it was about 4,500 acres, with more than one-fifth of the collectives cultivating between 5,000 and 12,000 acres each. Today the average collective is more than three and one-half times its prewar size.

Thus the slogan, "the bigger the farm, the better," based on the well-known Marxist doctrine of the absolute superiority of large-scale production, continues to dominate Soviet agricultural policy under Khrushchev as it did under Stalin. It is indeed true that gigantism has certain advantages in the special context of Soviet totalitarianism: notably, it tends to widen the gulf between the rank-and-file peasant members of the collectives and the farm managements, which have come to be composed largely of outsiders, and thus enhances the driving power of the managements over peasant labor. In its overall economic effect, however, there is little question in the author's mind that the Soviet chase after superlarge farms is negative. It is significant in this connection that in the United States, where farms in recent years have also tended to grow in size to the extent that proved profitable in terms of productive efficiency, only slightly over two percent of all commercial farms in 1954 had 500 acres or more of cropland under cultivation. But even a 500-acre farm is still puny compared to the 4,500 acres of the average Soviet collective.

Curiously enough, the team of U. S. Department of Agriculture economists which visited the Soviet Union last summer (and of which the author was a member) found that no specific studies had yet been made by Soviet agricultural experts on the relation between farm-size and farming efficiency. Now, apparently, such studies are either in progress or being planned, and it is the author's guess that, if and when they are completed, they will disclose that the old law of diminishing returns is not just a bourgeois illusion.

The Soviet collectivist Leviathan, however, has not as yet swallowed up the peasant's small household land allotments, nor eliminated the small-scale private ownership of livestock. At the beginning of 1958, in fact, the peasants still owned, in the aggregate, a considerable proportion of the livestock of all kinds, and even surpassed the communal herds of the collectives in number of cows. The attitude of the post-Stalin leadership toward such small private farming has been ambivalent, now relaxing, now tightening up; but on the whole it has not thus far been severely repressive, and it must be added that even the intensified Soviet collectivism of today still lags far behind the militarized communal slavery of present-day rural China.

Nevertheless, one of the salient features of Khrushchev's report of December 15 was its special emphasis on the transitory character of the peasant's household land allotments. Khrushchev indicated that, on the collective farms, these will be eliminated by a gradual process for which no definite time limit was given; but for the state farms he specifically fixed a limit of two or three years within which the livestock presently belonging to the farm workers will be bought out as a preliminary step toward the complete elimination of private farming in the state-operated sector. Khrushchev's indefiniteness respecting such action in the collectivized sector suggests the possibility that the process there will be cautious and tentative. Much may even depend on the "success" of the Chinese communal experiment.

State Farms *vs.* Collectives

Besides sparking the drive to merge the collectives into vaster units, Khrushchev has also been responsible for a remarkable expansion of the state farming sector. The state farms, it will be recalled, differ from the collectives in that they are owned and operated outright by the state, employing the peasants as laborers at regular wages, whereas the collectives, at least in theory, are owned and run by their peasant members who receive, instead of wages, a residual share of the fluctuating income of the collective. (In actual practice, the collectives, too, are tightly controlled by the party state.) There are at present more than 5,900 state farms, and their share of the total sown acreage, as of 1957, had

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increased to more than 25 percent as against about ten percent in 1952. To a large extent this growth is accounted for by the expansion of the crop area on formerly uncultivated lands beyond the Volga and Urals, of which more will be said later. In part, however, the new ascendancy of the state farms has been brought about by the absorption or conversion of peasant collectives—just the opposite of what occurred in the 1930's, when land was taken away from the state farms and allotted to the collectives.

The reversed trend has manifested itself not only in the "new lands" regions of the eastern USSR, but also in the areas of established farming. Among the latter, it has been particularly pronounced in the regions of the former war zone, where collective farming disintegrated during the hostilities and remained weak despite postwar rehabilitation. The U. S. agricultural economists' mission was told that the need for considerable new capital investment by the state has been at least one important factor determining the conversion of collectives into state farms. It should be added that what has already been said about gigantism in the collective farm sector applies even more emphatically to the state farms, which averaged in excess of 20,000 acres of sown area per farm in 1957.

The revived dynamism of the state farming sector after a long period of relative stability poses the question of whether it does not portend the eventual complete supplanting of the collective farms. The question certainly appears less academic now than a few years ago. It must be remembered that, from the ideological standpoint, the state farm has always been considered by the Communists a superior form of economic organization or, in Soviet parlance, a "higher type of socialist property" than the peasant collective. The continued coexistence of the two sectors has, it is true, been officially reaffirmed on numerous occasions,[3] and any intention to effect the mass conversion of collectives into state farms was again specifically disclaimed by Soviet officials in their talks with the American agricultural economists' mission last summer. Still, recent developments appear symptomatic of a shift toward greater reliance upon the state farms. For instance, the Soviet government recently decided, in order to lower the cost of vegetables and potatoes to the city consumer, to select 35 state farms near Moscow which would specialize in growing these products cheaply.[4] Should this experiment prove successful, it would—and indeed is unquestionably intended to —operate to the disadvantage of those collectives which derive an important share of their income from selling potatoes and vegetables at high prices on the free market. The practice, moreover, is being extended to other regions, creating an added threat to the co-existence of the two farm sectors.

Liquidation of the MTS

For the present, however, the question of the long-run displacement of the collectives by the state farming sector has been thrust into the background by the eclipse of the state machine-tractor stations (MTS), one of Khrushchev's major agricultural reforms. Formerly, as is well known, the tractors, combines and other modern farm machinery vital to collectivized agriculture, were, with some exceptions, owned and operated not by the collectives themselves, but by the MTS, which thus became the keystone of the Soviet agricultural structure. These special units not only provided indispensible services to the collectives, but also served as a focal point of agricultural control and direction on the local level. They were at the same time an important instrument for the acquistion of farm products by the state since they were compensated for their services to the collectives by stipulated fees in kind, *i.e.*, by deliveries of grain and other produce.

But the MTS system also meant dualism of agricultural management and divided responsibility—or, as Khrushchev put it, "two bosses on the land"[5]—which caused much friction, waste and inefficiency. The situation became especially incongruous with the merging of the collectives as this created cases in which one MTS was serving only a single large collective. That Soviet agriculture stood to gain from the removal of this dichotomy was long apparent to Western observers—and also, no doubt, to numerous specialists in the Soviet Union. But Stalin, to the very last, strenuously opposed the liquidation of the MTS, maintaining that a transfer of state property to the collectives would be a retrogressive step.[6]

Still, Stalin's death brought no quick change in policy: in fact, the new leadership at first took various steps which still further enhanced the role of the MTS.[7] Then, early in 1958, there was a curiously abrupt about-face. After some limited public discussion by specialists,

[3] See, for instance, theses of Khrushchev's report on "future development of the collective farm system and the reorganization of the machine-tractor-stations," *Pravda,* March 1, 1958.

[4] *Selskoe Khozyaistvo* (Agriculture), Moscow, Nov. 2, 1958.

[5] Khrushchev's report of January 22, in *Pravda,* Jan. 25, 1958.

[6] J. V. Stalin, "Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR," *ibid.*, Oct. 3 and 4, 1952.

[7] Lazar Volin, "The Malenkov-Khrushchev New Economic Policy," *Journal of Political Economy* (Chicago, Ill.), June 1954, p. 201.

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Khrushchev announced on January 22 that the MTS were to sell most of their machinery to the collective farms and thus be divested of their former vital functions to become mere service and supply centers.[8] This radical reform was rapidly carried out. By December of 1958, 81 percent of the collectives had acquired their own machinery from the MTS either by cash purchase or on credit.[9]

In abandoning Stalin's legacy in respect of the MTS, Khrushchev was guided—to judge from his own utterances—by pragmatic rather than ideological considerations. The first consideration was to eliminate the waste and inefficiency of dual agricultural management. Second was the leadership's apparent judgment that the considerable strengthening of the party apparatus in the countryside during the past five years had made it feasible to dispense with the control function of the MTS. Third, there was the belief that the MTS had also become less necessary as an instrumentality for state acquisition of farm products. Fourth, the leadership calculated that the collectives, thanks to their increased income as a result of higher farm prices, coupled with the prospect of a further increase due to anticipated economies from more efficient management, would be fully capable of bearing the burden of expenditures involved in the purchase of MTS machinery, its future upkeep and operation.

[8] *Pravda*, January 25, 1958.
[9] *Ibid.*, December 16, 1958.

Members of a collective happily welcome a tractor reassigned from the local MTS.

—From *Krokodil* (Moscow), April 20, 1958.

Indeed, from this last standpoint, Khrushchev may well view the purchase of MTS machinery by the collectives as not merely feasible but positively desirable as a channel for investment of part of their increased income. The fact that the collectives, prior to the MTS reform, were largely barred from acquiring their own machinery meant that their opportunities for productive capital investment were necessarily restricted. After all, they could not forever go on building "cow palaces," as one Soviet specialist contemptuously called the far too elaborately constructed barns in which the collectives had heavily invested in recent years. The alternative to capital investments is, of course, an increase of peasant earnings, but this also has been restrained by the pedestrian pace of Soviet consumer goods industry. Thus, the transfer of MTS functions to the collectives contains implications of a disinflationary or deflationary character. At the same time, since the government fixes the prices to be paid by the collectives for machinery, spare parts and fuel, the measure also affords opportunities for a new squeeze of the peasants. The author is not suggesting, however, that such a situation already exists; in fact, the reform supposedly gives the collectives freedom of choice in purchasing machinery, a privilege which the MTS never had. This confronts Soviet monopolistic industry with a new situation.

Barring a new squeeze, the reform will doubtless contribute toward greater overall farm efficiency—this despite a possible reduction, in some regions, of the mobility of skilled labor and equipment, which was a positive feature of the MTS system. Above all, it should make possible the pinpointing of managerial responsibility, and it should also simplify the calculation of production costs in the collectives. Nevertheless, there still remain many problems of adjustment, including the integration of former MTS skilled workers and specialists into the structure of the collective farms.

THE LIQUIDATION OF THE MTS may serve to facilitate the implementation of another Khrushchev reform, namely the decentralization of agricultural planning procedure decreed in 1955. This measure assigned responsibility for the detailed planning of crop and livestock production to the collective farms themselves, confining the sphere of central planning to the determination of the size of the farms' delivery quotas and the volume of work to be performed by machine-tractor stations. The reservation of central authority in these latter areas meant that the Kremlin still could exert indirect influence on the crop and livestock production plans of the collectives, and of course it could always step in and apply the pressure—as, in fact, it did in imposing the corn ex-

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pansion drive. Nevertheless, the move toward decentralization was a step in the right direction and signified the post-Stalin leadership's recognition of the long obvious folly of too detailed and rigid agricultural planning from the top. It is of interest in this connection that the criticisms of the old planning methods voiced in recent years by Khrushchev and other Soviet spokesmen sound very much like those long expressed by Western specialists.[10]

Certain difficulties arose, however, in the implementation of the planning reform. In particular, the 1955 decree had given the MTS a share in the planning operations of the collective farms and had also accorded certain responsibilities of supervision to other local authorities, with the result that these agencies often usurped the planning functions of the collectives. Thus, the elimination of the MTS could conceivably diminish the practical difficulties standing in the way of the decentralization reform, but it remains to be seen whether it will, in fact, make grassroots farm planning more effective.

More Carrot, Less Stick

Another important break with latter-day Stalinism made by his heirs has been the increasing reliance on economic incentives in collective farming, that is, on the proverbial carrot rather than the stick. This change harks back to Stalin's earlier policies of the mid-1930's when economic incentives were employed to spur the recovery of Soviet agriculture from the ravages of the initial collectivization drive. The earlier phase, of course, was but a brief and fleeting one. To illustrate how unrealistic Stalin's policies later became, Khrushchev told in his destalinization speech of a proposal by the late dictator to increase taxes on the collective farms and their members by 40 billion rubles when, in 1952 for instance, they received only 26,280 billion rubles for all products delivered and sold to the state. Even taking into account the substantial additional earnings of the collectives and their members from private trade, Khrushchev's characterization of Stalin's proposal as "based on the fantastic ideas of a person divorced from reality" still holds true.

After Stalin's death, the new leadership instituted a contrary policy of reducing taxes and substantially raising the very low prices hitherto paid by the state for farm products. As a consequence of this and of increased farm output, the cash income of the collectives more than doubled, from 42.8 billion rubles to 95 billion, between 1952 and 1956-57. This in turn made possible cash payments to the peasants in many collectives where such distributions had formerly been negligible. The cash payments, in fact, more than trebled between 1952 and 1956, increasing from 12.4 billion to 42.2 billion rubles.[11]

Yet, even the greatly increased volume of cash distributed in 1956 represented an average cash income of only something over 2100 rubles per peasant family on the collective farms, a sum roughly equivalent to a little more than $200 at a realistic rate of exchange. In 1952 the average had been as little as 623 rubles, equivalent —with higher prices—to less than $60 per peasant household. Moreover, since the cash distributions in some areas of intensive crop production (such as the growing of cotton, sugar beets, etc.) were considerably above the average rate, many peasant families in the less prosperous collectives obviously received much less than the average.

It is well to remember, however, that cash distributions by the collectives have not been the only major source of the peasants' money income. As pointed out earlier, the anomaly represented by the small household land allotments still persists, and while these were officially intended to play the very minor role of a mere subsistence-farming appendage, they actually have rivaled, and often outstripped, the collective economy as a source of cash income for the peasants, largely derived from the sale of farm produce on the free market. In 1956, for example, free market sales in the cities totaled more than 38 billion rubles, of which less than 10 percent represented sales by the collective farms themselves, while the rest represented predominantly sales by the *kolkhozniki* of the produce of their household allotments. The large contribution made by the latter to the peasants' money income not only makes it easy to understand the importance of such small private farming but also underscores the dichotomy between dwarfism and gigantism in the collective farm economy—a phenomenon which has long been a thorn in the side of the Kremlin. It should be pointed out, however, that the peasants' income from sales of their own produce in the free market has recently dropped to a level where it no longer overshadows their cash receipts from the collectives, although the situation still varies widely from region to region and from farm to farm.

Much less information is available concerning what is still the most important component of the peasant's income from the collective farms, *i.e.*, payments in kind. Without such information, it is impossible to assess fully the changed economic position of the peasantry; how-

[10] *Selskoe Khozyaistvo,* March 21, 1954.

[11] *Narodnoe khozyaistvo SSSR v 1956 Godu* (National Economy of the USSR in 1956), Moscow, 1957, p. 140; and Khrushchev's speech of Jan. 22, *Pravda,* January 25, 1958.

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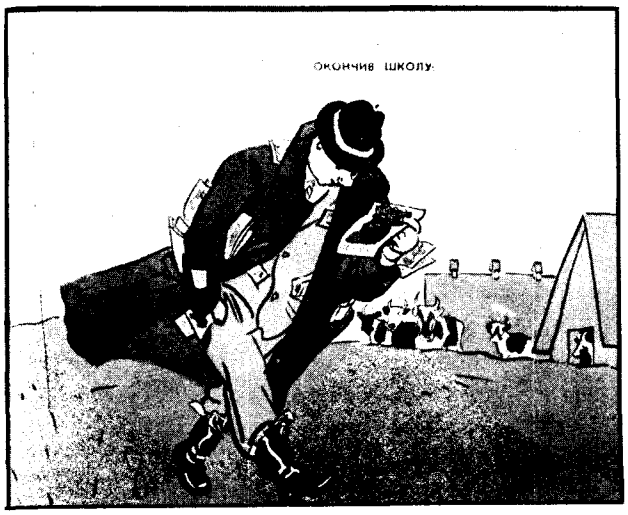
ever, since payments in kind are mostly in grain and since there have been several large grain harvests in recent years, it is safe to assume that more grain was distributed. This has been confirmed by Soviet data at least for the Russian Republic (RSFSR), where the grain distribution per household in 1956 was reported to have shown a 72 percent increase compared with 1950, and 36.5 percent compared with 1953 (although unfortunately no absolute figures were given).[12]

Other Measures and Labor Input

There is another phase of the economic incentives program which merits attention, specifically the efforts currently being made to rationalize methods of paying the peasants. A significant straw in the wind is the fact that a few collectives are experimenting with paying the peasants their share of the farm income entirely in cash instead of the traditional dual form of payment, partly in kind and partly in cash. Where this is being done, the peasants merely purchase such products as they need from the collective, paying for them out of their cash earnings. The new method is often combined with abandonment of the cumbersome old system of computing peasant earnings in terms of "workday" units (*trudoden*), as is necessary with partial payment in kind. Thus far, however, another type of experiment has been more frequent than the resort to all-cash payment: it involves the introduction of a system of monthly or quarterly payments to the peasants in the form of so-called "advances" based on "workday" units, instead of the old method which relied principally on year-end settlement. While the peasant thus still remains a shareholder in the collective, the effect of both these innovations is to render his payments more certain and prompt. The general success of such measures, however, hinges upon a substantial increase of the peasants' share of collective farm income, and upon the growth of that income itself. Moreover, in the background of any substantial rise of money incomes in the Soviet countryside always lurks the dilemma of having to choose between making available a sharply increased supply of consumer goods, or accepting inflation. The Kremlin does not really appear to be ready for the former, and it clearly does not want the latter.

Other methods besides increased economic incentives have been resorted to by the Soviet leadership in order to assure the supply of agricultural labor and bring about increased labor input. Various drives have been carried out: to return to the farms skilled workers who had migrated to the cities; to bring farm specialists closer to grassroots agricultural activity; to enlist trusted party personnel or specialists as farm managers and, above all to recruit several hundred thousands, mostly young men and women, for agricultural development work in the so-called "virgin lands" regions. In addition, there have been the annual, or perennial, mobilizations of students and city-dwellers to assist in harvesting crops, although Khrushchev had for some time been critical of this *ad hoc*, makeshift practice and finally called for its elimination in his December 15, 1958, report.

What of the effect of these policies on labor input? While helpful statistics on this point are by no means abundant, Soviet sources have provided one important series of figures showing the total number of "workday" units earned each year by the peasants. According to these data, the total number of units increased by 25.5 percent between 1952 and 1956. Incidentally, the figure for 1952 was still below the prewar level, while that for 1956 was 19 percent above. This improvement reflects both a larger number of workers and a greater contribution per worker. The latter is shown roughly by the claimed increase in the average number of workdays per able-bodied peasant from 295 in 1953 to 335 in 1957, a rise of 13.6 percent. The increased contribution per worker, however, does not signify anything like a corresponding rise in the qualitative efficiency of labor. Workday units do not measure the same labor inputs in different collectives. Moreover, Soviet sources often criticize the "waste of workdays" in agriculture, meaning simply the wasteful, inefficient employment of farm labor.



A school graduate on rural assignment gets his "first acquaintance" with farm animals.

—From *Krokodil*, November 10, 1958.

[12] *RSFSR za 40 Let, Statisticheskii Sbornik* (RSFSR over Forty Years, Statistical Collection), Moscow, 1957, p. 125.

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In fact, Khrushchev himself, as recently as in his December 15 report, cited comparative Soviet and U. S. statistics for labor expenditure per unit of product, confirming conclusively Western specialists' first-hand observations of the inefficient use of labor in Soviet agriculture. These statistics indicate for instance that, to produce a centner of grain, 80 percent more labor is used on Soviet state farms, and 630 percent more on collective farms, than in the United States; for potatoes, 320 and 410 percent more, respectively; and so on. To be sure, Khrushchev intimated that the American figures "color up" the picture by underestimating labor expenditures, while the Soviet statistics perhaps overestimate them. Nevertheless, he stressed that the gap is still a wide one, which the Soviet leadership is anxious to close.

More Capital for Agriculture

Still another departure from Stalinist policy that has characterized the Khrushchev era is the increase of capital investments in agriculture. Under Stalin, agriculture was made to serve as a source of capital accumulation for financing a lopsided industrialization program: what Stalin bluntly called "something like a tribute" [13] was exacted from the peasantry—a process more subtly defined by others, like Preobrazhensky, as "the law of original socialist accumulation." In effect, this law relegated peasant agriculture to a role, vis-à-vis the socialist industrial sector, somewhat similar to that which the Marxian theory of original capitalist accumulation ascribed to colonial areas vis-à-vis the economies of the exploiting capitalist powers.

Under Khrushchev, this earlier policy of wholesale exploitation has been moderated so as to give greater recognition to the capital needs of agriculture itself. The collectives have been required to increase their own capital accumulation out of increased money income and greater labor resources. As a result, their officially estimated capital investments more than doubled from less than 10 billion rubles in 1952 to 22 billion in 1956; [14] and the so-called "indivisible fund", representing total capital assets of the collectives, rose from an estimated 63.1 billion rubles at the end of 1952 to 98.9 billion at the end of 1956, an increase of 57 percent. [15] (It should be noted that the sizable capital investments by the collective farms acted as a brake on the rise of peasant money income.)

Besides this, there has been an increase in government budget appropriations for agriculture, principally for the MTS and state farms, from 37 billion rubles in 1951, and 33.4 billion in 1952, to 49.1 billion in 1956, and a planned 53 billion in 1957. [16] There has also been an increase in long-term state credits to collective farms in recent years. And finally, government capital investments in agriculture during 1956 were officially estimated (in terms of July 1, 1955 prices) at 20.9 billion rubles, as compared with a total of 63 billion during the preceding five years and only 24.8 billion during 1946-50. [17]

But while the position of Soviet agriculture in respect of capital investments has markedly improved over Stalin's day, the author regards it as still deficient on two counts. First, even the higher investment level of today still remains inadequate to permit the fully effective use of land and labor. One result of this inadequacy, for instance, is unevenness in mechanization: some operations, such as the cutting of grain, are highly mechanized, while others, like cleaning and drying of grain, are still carried out inefficiently by hand labor. Another consequence is the inadequate development of irrigation in the extensive subhumid zone where such projects would surely pay off in higher crop yields per acre. The second deficiency lies in the wastefulness and diminished economic (and sometimes even physical) effectiveness of some forms of Soviet capital investment in agriculture. The building of "cow palaces" has already been mentioned. The use of tractors much larger than necessary is another example, although Khrushchev has begun to correct this particular form of "gigantomania," which was inherited from the Stalin regime.

Procurement Methods and Prices

Another crucial area of reform during Khrushchev's leadership has centered on the government procurement system for farm products. The fundamental importance in the Soviet economy of the state acquisition of farm products, especially of grain, needs no reiteration. In particular, it is through the government procurements and the prices at which they are carried out that economic incentives—or disincentives—largely operate. As pointed out earlier, the Khrushchev regime, putting emphasis on incentives, substantially raised the prices paid for farm products, and compulsory deliveries by the peasants

[13] J. V. Stalin's *Collected Works* (Russian), Vol. 12, pp. 40-51.

[14] *Narodnoe khozyaistvo SSSR v 1956* Godu, p. 173.

[15] *Ibid*, p. 140.

[16] *Finansy i Sotsialisticheskoe Stroitelstvo* (Financial Aspects of Socialist Construction), Moscow, 1957, p. 150.

[17] *Forty Years of Soviet Power in Facts and Figures* (in English), Moscow, 1958, p. 193.

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of crops and livestock from their own small private plots have gradually been abolished.

The procurement system, however, as it had developed over a period of years, was characterized by a considerable diversity of methods or types of procurement of the same product, and by a corresponding multiplicity of prices. Basic to all were the compulsory deliveries, for which quotas were fixed by the government on the basis of so much grain, potatoes, meat, etc. per unit of tillable or total land. The lowest prices were usually paid for this type of procurement. Next there was the so-called contracting method used for industrial and intensive crops like cotton, sugar beets, etc. Though essentially similar to compulsory deliveries, this type of procurement usually involved a graduated scale of prices increasing with the quantities delivered. Then, there were extra-quota purchases by the state, for which considerably higher prices were paid than for compulsory deliveries. In recent years the extra-quota purchases tended to become increasingly important, while the role of lower-priced compulsory deliveries declined. Finally, there were payments in kind for the work of the MTS, although these, of course, are now being eliminated with the liquidation of the MTS.

A MOVE to rationalize this complex set-up was at last made by the Khrushchev leadership in June 1958 with the adoption of a reform measure unifying the different types of procurement into a single system of state purchases. While compulsory deliveries as such were nominally abolished, the new system nevertheless retains quotas per unit of land (fixed according to government plans) which the collectives are supposed to meet. Instead of the old multiple price structure, single prices are now fixed by the state for each commodity within a region. An important feature of the new system is that it does away with the premium prices which previously existed for certain crops. Further, although price stability was one of the general aims of the reform, provision was made for an annual review of prices with a view to raising or lowering them to cope with sharp fluctuations in output, thus giving some recognition to the law of supply and demand.[18] These changes admittedly simplified the old system to a degree. There now exist only two prices for a given commodity in each locality: a government price, and a free market price if the commodity is traded on the limited private market. This, however, is still a far cry from a rational price system, the lack of which, as many economists have pointed out, greatly hinders economic calculations and planning decisions in the Soviet Union.

With regard to actual procurement prices under the new system, discussion is hampered by a lack of sufficiently detailed data. However, it can be stated on the basis of what is available that the new prices are considerably higher than the old compulsory delivery prices which, even after they were raised in 1953-54, were still the lowest among the different categories of state-fixed prices. For a number of commodities, the new prices are lower than the former extra-quota purchase prices; for others, they are on the same level or somewhat higher. The abolition of premium prices will no doubt hit collective farms growing such crops as cotton, sugar beets, hemp and others which previously received preferential price treatment. Khrushchev openly admitted as much, but contended that the more productive collectives should henceforth obtain higher income, not from price differentials, but by lowering production costs and increasing output.[19] In any event, the average prices now being paid to such collectives are lower than before, and also, probably, their money incomes. This may well have an adverse effect upon the output of certain crops in the usually more productive farms, and the loss may or may not be compensated for by increased production on the other farms. In general, the new prices appear to have been tailored to benefit the average, or less prosperous, collective farms. The guiding principle was stated by Khrushchev on June 17, 1958, as follows:

Although the total expenditures of the state for the purchase of agricultural products will remain at approximately the same level as last year, they will be distributed more fairly among the collective farms, thanks to the new prices.[20]

Khrushchev indicated further that the total procurement expenditures would include the expenses formerly incurred by the state for the MTS, but now being borne by the collectives themselves. If this principle of stability in total procurement expenditures is continued beyond 1958 and consistently adhered to, it will tend to act as a "ceiling on the money component of the gross collective farm income in good crop years like 1958, and perhaps as a "floor" precluding a sharp drop in income in years of poor crops. This means that the expansion of total farm income in good crop years will take the form of an increase of its "in kind" component, and possibly of receipts from private trade.

[18] Decree of the CC of the CPSU on abolition of procurements, *etc., Pravda,* June 20, 1958; and Decree of the Council of Ministers of the USSR on the same subject, *Pravda* July 1, 1958.

[19] Khrushchev's speeches in *Pravda,* June 21, 1958, and *Selskoe Khozyaistvo,* October 21, 1958.

[20] Khrushchev's speech in *Pravda,* June 21, 1958.

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The main objective of Soviet agricultural price policy in the coming years, however, will undoubtedly be to achieve lower prices concomitant with a reduction of production costs. This brings up a new and important feature of current Soviet procurement policy: the projected concentration of procurements of any given commodity in the areas of most economical production, instead of requiring every region from the Baltic to the Pacific and from the Arctic to the Black Sea to deliver identical products, such as grain for instance. This move is linked with what appears to be more than a mere academic concern with regional specialization in agriculture, based on production cost studies. Consciousness of costs is itself a new phenomenon in the management of Soviet agriculture, heretofore preoccupied almost exclusively with the fulfilment of physical targets; and it is here that the economists come in. There is a new interest in the theory and methodology of farm costs, and investigations of these matters covering more than just a single farm have been resumed for the first time since the late 1920's.[21] Khrushchev himself reflected the new cost consciousness when he said in his December 15, 1958 report: "It is impossible to carry on farming without a thorough analysis of the costs of commodities being produced without control by means of the ruble."[22] The Soviet leader is talking like an economist.

FINALLY, a few brief remarks must be devoted to the most important of the direct programs instituted by Khrushchev for boosting farm production, namely the vast expansion of cultivated acreage in the sub-humid and semi-arid zones east of the Volga and the Urals. This "new lands" program represents, of course, the traditional Russian method of expanding farm production, that is, by expanding acreage rather than by intensifying agriculture. The author has examined the program in detail in several previous articles and will therefore confine himself here to indicating the magnitude of the expansion of acreage that has taken place.

In the three years from 1954 through 1956, the Soviet crop area was increased by more than 20 percent, or about 90 million acres—almost equal to the combined arable land of France, Western Germany, and the United Kingdom. To be sure, most of this new acreage lies in a zone of unfavorable climatic conditions, with a short growing season and frequent devastating droughts, hence an area of hazardous agriculture characterized by fluctuating and low average crop yields. Yet, this achievement should not be underestimated. While the average yields per acre are low, the multiplier of the huge acreage involved has meant a substantial increase in the production of food, of feed, and hence of livestock, although official Soviet claims with respect to the large production of milk and meat appear to be too high. The outturn of crops has been large in years of good weather, particularly in 1958 when the weather conditions were favorable during the growing season in most important regions of the USSR, an exceptional occurrence.

Despite the increased production achieved, however, there is good reason to believe that, if the potentialities of the regions with more favorable climatic conditions had been more fully exploited, the extension of cultivation on what is mostly marginal land in the eastern regions would not have been necessary, or at least not necessary to the same extent. The alternative, of course, envisages an increase of per acre crop yields through more efficient and intensive agriculture, but under the Soviet system of collective farming it has evidently been easier to expand acreage than to increase yields, except in the restricted sectors where there has been a heavy concentration of resources, as for instance in the growing of cotton. Yet, it is precisely upon an improvement of yields that the high agricultural targets stipulated in the new Seven-Year Plan (1959-65) are predicated. Weather, of course, will be a vital factor. But even though, with reasonably good weather conditions, further gains in production can undoubtedly be realized, the prospects for achieving the Plan goals must be viewed with a certain dose of skepticism.

To sum up, the effect on production of a number of the reforms reviewed in the present article can be rated as generally positive, although some, such as Khrushchev's continuing predilection toward farm gigantism, seem negative. However, one thing must be borne in mind even with respect to the positive measures: they are subject to limitations by reason of the simple fact that the Khrushchev leadership has remained tied to the Procrustean bed of Soviet agrarian collectivism and industrialization policy. The latter spells continued overemphasis on heavy industry and underemphasis on consumers' and other goods needed to assure the Soviet farmer of a real measure of well-being.

[21] M. L. Terentiev, *Sebestoimost Kolkhoznoi Produktsii* (The Cost of Production of Collective Farm Output), Moscow, 1957, p. 5

[22] *Pravda,* December 16, 1958.

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Was Lenin a German Agent?

Z.A.B. Zeman, Ed.:
Germany and the Revolution in Russia, 1915-1918,
Oxford University Press, London and N. Y., 1958.

Alan Moorehead:
The Russian Revolution,
Collins, London; Harper & Bros., N. Y., 1958.

Reviewed by F. L. Carsten

THE QUESTION WHETHER the Bolsheviks were German agents has been discussed ever since Lenin returned to Russia in April 1917 in a sealed train put at his disposal by the Kaiser's government. The motives which made such strange bed-fellows were simple: the German government, and especially the High Command, were eager to bring about a separate peace with Russia at the earliest possible moment, so as to free German divisions for the planned offensive in the west; the Russian provisional government refused to conclude such a separate peace and was determined to remain loyal to its allies. Among the Russian revolutionary groups in Switzerland only the Bolsheviks were in favor of an immediate peace, "without annexations and indemnities," and were willing to cross Germany on their return to Russia because they feared that they would be detained by the Entente if they travelled through allied territory.

Did this journey and the policy advocated by Lenin after his return to Russia make him a German agent? Were German funds made available to him, either in Switzerland, or after his return to Russia? These questions have been debated ever since the "Sisson documents", published by the United States government in October 1918, attempted to prove that Lenin acted on German orders and was a mere tool of the Imperial government.[1] A few years ago, however, Dr. George Kennan conclusively proved that these documents were a forgery.[2] Yet even his conclusions were tentative with regard to letters among the documents relating to the period *before* the October revolution (published in Appendix i of the 1918 pamphlet). Dr. Kennan wrote:

> **The question as to what sources of clandestine external support the Bolsheviki had during the spring and summer of 1917 is a complicated one. . . . That there was extensive communication between the Bolshevik leaders and persons in Scandinavia in these months; that this communication involved persons whose names occur in these letters; and that the communication very probably involved the transfer of funds to the Bolsheviki from *some* external sources—all this seems fairly well established. Further inquiry will have to establish whether the German government itself was behind this, or whether the moneys came only from friendly foreign socialist sources and other well-wishers abroad. In either case, there might well have been some substance behind these letters. . . .**[3]

THUS THE RECENT publication from the German archives of documents relating to Germany's attitude towards the revolution in Russia is of the greatest importance: from these documents, edited by Mr. Z. A. B. Zeman, it emerges how much money the German government spent on supporting the Russian revolutionary movement, and what its relations were with the Bolsheviks and other opposition groups.

Yet the evidence is still inconclusive. For example, very large sums were paid out by the Kaiser's government during World War I to various agents for the fostering of subversive propaganda in Russia. What we do not learn is how much of this money ever reached Russia, who received it, and how it was used. Naturally, no accounts were kept by these agents nor by the revolutionary groups. Surprisingly enough, the Imperial government was willing to spend large amounts on these projects, without any guarantee that the money reached

[1] *The German-Bolshevik Conspiracy,* War Information Series, No. 20, 1918.

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[2] George F. Kennan, "The Sisson Documents," *Journal of Modern History,* xxviii, 1956, pp. 130 ff.; *Russia leaves the war,* Princeton Univ. Press, Princeton, N. J., and Faber, London, 1956, pp. 413-20, 442-56.

[3] "The Sisson Documents," *loc. cit.,* p. 154.

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its destined ends and, if so, that it was spent in the interests of the donor. As early as March 1915 two million marks was allocated to the support of Russian revolutionary propaganda, most of which was paid out to Dr. Alexander Helphand, alias Parvus, who was in fact a German agent and at one time had been a close associate of Trotsky. Another million rubles was paid to him at the end of the year.[4] In a memorandum to the German government of March 1915 Parvus pointed out that a political mass strike in Russia could only be organized "under the leadership of the Russian Social Democrats. The radical wing of this party [*i.e.*, the Bolsheviks] has already gone into action, but it is essential that they be joined by the moderate minority group. . . ." He went on to list the Bolsheviks under Lenin as the first among the groups which he proposed should be invited to attend a congress of Russian revolutionaries to organize immediate action against Tsarism.[5]

PARVUS HAD contacts with Radek and others; but the fact that he worked for Germany was so well known that Lenin, in passing through Stockholm in April 1917 on his famed return journey to Russia, refused to see Parvus and had this refusal recorded by several witnesses. Lenin, always extremely suspicious, was well aware of the fact that his journey in the German sealed train would be exploited by his political enemies, and for that reason and as the leader of his party shunned any contact with Parvus. But some less prominent Bolsheviks had no such scruples. Those at Stockholm—Radek, Hanecki and Vorovsky—continued to see Parvus regularly; Hanecki was in effect employed by him. When Philip Scheidemann, the German Social Democratic leader, went there at the end of 1917 he noted that "Parvus saw Vorovsky every day," although by that time the latter had become the Soviet envoy in Stockholm.[6] It is quite inconceivable that Lenin was unaware of these contacts, nor would they have continued if he had opposed them. Lenin must have known, or at least suspected, what was going on, but preferred to let other people do the dubious work for his party. It cannot be proved that Parvus handed over any German money to the Bolsheviks, but it is more than likely. This was also the general opinion at the time, according to a report of the German legation in Stockholm to Berlin; in its view, Parvus was quite unsuitable to be sent to Petrograd as an emissary because it "would present Bolsheviks' opponents with a powerful weapon by 'electing' a man like him as courier, while the other side says that hardly are the Bolsheviks at the helm before Parvus pays them their allowance . . . "[7]

If Lenin was extremely careful in his personal contacts with Parvus, he could nevertheless accept money from that source, provided its provenance was sufficiently camouflaged. How easily this was done emerges from the report of another German agent about a meeting in Switzerland with "leading representatives of different groups within the pacifist Socialist party," among which it is very likely that there were some Bolsheviks:

> **After they had shown clear and, I might almost say, joyful willingness to accept financial support for the specific purpose of work for peace, I said that I, for my part, would be happy to grant considerable sums for such a noble, humanitarian and internationalist aim. Moreover, the Russian revolution had made such a magnificent moral impression and had aroused such generous impulses that other persons of my acquaintance would be only too pleased to sacrifice large sums to support the Russian revolution by helping to achieve an immediate peace. These offers were all accepted with great pleasure. . . . It would therefore be all the more pleasing if large sums could be put at the disposal of those in favor of peace by wealthy comrades and friends. . . . The personality of the donor would guarantee that the money came from an unobjectionable source. . . . Coming from me, the offer silenced all their doubts and objections. . . .**[8]

AFTER THE OUTBREAK of the revolution further large sums were allocated by the German government to political propaganda inside Russia: five million marks in April, and fifteen million in November 1917.[9] These payments continued even after the conclusion of the treaty of Brest-Litovsk in March 1918, a fact hitherto unknown. In June 1918 the German Minister in Moscow, Count Mirbach, wired that "due to strong Entente competition, 3,000,000 marks per months [is] necessary. . . . ," and the sum of forty million marks was approved.[10] It was only the assassination of Count Mirbach, by left Social Revolutionaries in July 1918 and the subsequent withdrawal of the German diplomatic mission which put an end to this policy. As on previous occa-

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[4] Zeman, pp. 3, 10.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 140: "Preparations for a Political Mass Strike in Russia."

[6] P. Scheidemann, *Memoirs of a Social Democrat,* Hodder, London, 1929, ii. 435.

[7] Zeman, p. 87: telegram to the German Foreign Ministry of November 22, 1917.

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 55-6: the Military Attaché of the German Legation in Bern, incorporating a report from a Herr Baier of May 4, 1917.

[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 24, 75.

[10] *Ibid.*, pp. 130, 133, 137, and n. 2.

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sions, there is no indication of the specific recipients to whom these vast sums were paid. But there is some other evidence of its utilization. In the autumn of 1917 the German Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Richard von Kühlmann, in telegrams to General Headquarters claimed that it was German financial support which had facilitated the success of the Bolsheviks:

Our work together has shown tangible results. The Bolshevik movement could never have attained the scale or the influence which it has today without our continual support. . . .

And two months later (in an exposé to be submitted to Wilhelm II):

It was not until the Bolsheviks had received from us a steady flow of funds through various channels and under different labels that they were in a position to be able to build up their main organ, *Pravda,* to conduct energetic propaganda and appreciably to extend the originally narrow basis of their party. The Bolsheviks have now come to power. . . .[11]

On May 18, 1918, von Kühlmann sent a telegram to Count Mirbach in Moscow showing why he followed this course so consistently:

Please use larger sums, as it is greatly in our interests that Bolsheviks should survive. . . . As a party, Kadets are anti-German; Monarchists would also work for revision of Brest peace treaty. We have no interest in supporting Monarchists' ideas, which would reunite Russia. On the contrary, we must try and prevent Russian consolidation as far as possible and, from this point of view, we must therefore support the parties furthest to the left.[12]

In other words, neither the October (November) revolution nor the conclusion of the treaty of Brest-Litovsk caused a change of German policy: to bring about a separate peace with Russia, to support the party which was in favor of such a peace, and to maintain it in power after the conclusion of the peace treaty. The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, and Lenin in particular, were determined to come into power by any means at their disposal: being desperately short of money, there was clearly a great temptation to accept sums offered to them and not to enquire too closely into their provenance. During the earlier history of the Bolshevik party its funds had been replenished by "expropriation" raids on Russian banks and other methods closely akin to robbery, tactics which were spurned by other revolutionary groups.[13]

From Lenin's point of view there was nothing contemptible or dangerous in this as long as he did not have to modify his policy to suit the German book, as long as he did not act on German instructions, as long as he did not become their agent and informer. That he *was* under such obligation is the allegation which the 1918 "Sisson documents" tried to substantiate. But there is no evidence whatever in the documents now published to support this allegation, a conclusion which is also reached by Mr. Zeman, their editor.[14]

ON THE OTHER HAND, the collection of documents has raised a number of controversial questions, especially the extent to which German money contributed to the Bolsheviks' success. The latter question has led to a somewhat heated discussion in English journals,[15] particularly after a review of the collection, published anonymously in *The Times Literary Supplement,* maintained:

Whatever volume of funds Germany may have pumped into Russia through secret channels in the years of the war, it appears to have had no significant influence on the course of events. . . .

The review tried further to minimize the importance of the von Kühlmann telegrams by asserting that Kühlmann was notoriously a vain man and an unreliable witness."[16]

In contrast to this viewpoint, Mr. George Katkov has asserted:

. . . a few million rubles for propaganda and party work might well have been decisive in helping Lenin to usurp the power held by his weak and bewildered opponents. . . .

And Mr. Leonard Schapiro has concurred:

Possession of ample funds for subversive propaganda between March and November, 1917, was a most significant factor in the Bolshevik victory. Hitherto the source of this money was a matter for conjecture and suspicion. Now we know that the German Foreign Minister admitted that he provided it.[17]

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[11] *Ibid.,* pp. 70, 94: telegrams of September 29 and December 3, 1917.

[12] *Ibid.,* pp. 128-29. *Cf.* the view of Kennan, *Russia Leaves the War,* p. 456: "There is, however, no reason to believe that any German money passed to the Bolsheviki after the November Revolution. . . ."

[13] For details see Bertram D. Wolfe, *Three who made a Revolution,* Dial Press, New York, 1948, pp. 379-96.

[14] Zeman, p. x.

[15] George Katkov, "German Foreign Office Documents on Financial Support to the Bolsheviks," *International Affairs,* xxxii, 1956, pp. 181 ff.; *The Times Literary Supplement,* August 8, 22, 29, September 12, and October 3, 1958.

[16] *The Times Literary Supplement,* Aug. 8, 1958, p. 442.

[17] *Ibid.,* pp. 513, 561.

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Von Kühlmann's estimate of the importance of German money in helping the Bolsheviks may have been "self-flattering and exaggerated," but it cannot, in the present writer's view, be entirely disregarded; nor can his later silence on this point be adduced to prove that his original claim was untrue. Whatever his unreliability, it seems very unlikely that he would have made entirely unfounded statements in communications addressed to persons who must have been aware of the facts. Moreover, we know from the diaries of Goebbels and from other sources how severe a handicap the shortage of funds was to the Nazis in December 1932, and how important their renewed flow was to their success in January 1933. It is possible that the Bolsheviks would have come to power in any event, but German support clearly facilitated their task.

It should be borne in mind, however, that the factor which above all played into the hands of the Bolsheviks was the policy of the provisional government. In 1917 the Russian masses had two primary demands: "land and peace." The people turned against the provisional government because it did not fulfill these demands, and supported its opponents who promised that they would. Money could—and did—help the Bolsheviks, but money could not create the revolutionary situation which they were able to exploit. This point seems to have been neglected by the contributors to the discussion.

THAT THE SAME DOCUMENTS can be interpreted in an entirely different sense has been shown by a curious coincidence: the almost simultaneous publication of Alan Moorehead's history of the Russian revolution, which is based on the researches of Professor S. T. Possony of Georgetown University (Washington, D. C.) and many collaborators, and was financed by the University of Pennsylvania and *Life* magazine. We are told by Mr. Moorehead that in the course of these researches "all available diplomatic records, not only in Germany, but throughout Europe, and even in countries as far afield as Turkey and Japan," were examined and that "100,000 odd documents were perused" (p. 13).[18]

The result of these vast labors pursued over many years is a work which seems to aim at blackening Lenin's character by various insinuations and tries to prove in particular that he was unscrupulous about money throughout his life. We are informed, for example, that in 1904 the Japanese financed revolutionary propaganda in Russia and that all kinds of people were hoodwinked into supporting them. Then the book continues: "Lenin's part is obscure. It is known, however, that he obtained money at this time . . . " (p. 64-5). The reader is left to draw the obvious inference. Somewhat later (pp. 94-5) we are told that Lenin converted the money obtained by the expropriation raids in Russia "directly to his own use", that he "found ways of steering this money into his own pocket," as if the funds of his party and his private fortune were identical. In narrating how the Okhrana (Tsarist secret police) succeeded in planting informers in the revolutionary organizations and mentioning the successful spies, Azev and Malinovsky, we are treated to this comment (p. 105):

In a wager as to whether the Tsar or the Bolsheviks fostered the greater scoundrels in their entourage, no detached observer would confidently risk a penny. . . .

In reality, however, Azev was not a Bolshevik, but a Social Revolutionary, and (as Mr. Moorehead himself mentions) Malinovsky was later executed by the Bolsheviks.

The mind of the reader having thus been well preconditioned, there follows the heart of the story: the use of German funds for revolutionary propaganda in Russia during World War I, the story also told by the documents published by Mr. Zeman. But how different this story looks as seen by Mr. Moorehead! His comment on a somewhat inconclusive meeting between Lenin and a German agent, the Estonian Kesküla, is (p. 139):

Yet some sort of an understanding was reached between the two men, and almost certainly money was involved . . . Lenin was in funds again. . . .

If this still contains an element of doubt, four pages later (p. 143) we read:

Having at first regarded Keskula as, possibly, an *agent-provocateur,* Lenin accepted him as his go-between with the Germans, took money from him, and confided his peace-plans to him. . . .

Kesküla did indeed report to the Germans that Lenin's program contained demands for a renunciation of Russian claims to Constantinople and the Dardanelles, and for the moving of Russian troops into India. But in Mr. Moorehead's opinion this revealed something much more sinister—namely, proof of "how far Lenin was prepared to go at this time in making a deal with Germany." To Mr. Moorehead, the information imparted by Lenin (supposedly in the form of "proposals for making peace with Germany in the event of the Bolsheviks obtaining power in Russia,") meant "in effect . . . that Bolshevik Russia would be prepared to give Germany a free hand in the Middle East, and would

[18] Page references are to Collins' British edition of Mr. Moorehead's book.

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become an ally of Germany in an attack on the British Empire." (p. 141).[19]

After all this, we need not be surprised to find the author ascribing an inordinate amount of significance to the work of German agents following the February (March) revolution (they "were instructed to work for the overthrow of Milyukov and his replacement by a government that was more amenable to the Germans, if possible a government of Bolsheviks"); describing (without offering any evidence) sundry "secret dealings" between the Bolsheviks and German agents; and naming—again without any basis in fact—the venerable Swiss Social Democratic leader, Robert Grimm, as one of these agents (p. 216).[20]

Finally, Lenin's attitude during the peace negotiations of Brest-Litovsk is described thus (p. 297):

Lenin had his understanding with the Germans; they had sent him back to Russia in order to seize power and make peace, and they had financed him. . . .

Clearly, Lenin not only took German money, but was put into power by the Germans and carried out their instructions: we are back at the charge made by the "Sisson documents". The October revolution, seen in this way, was a conspiracy instigated by the Kaiser's government: we are not too far removed from the views of the Wise Men of Zion. Even the February revolution, Mr. Moorehead seems to imply, was instigated by someone. On the one hand he says (p.155):

You could not call it spontaneous [because] for weeks and months, even for years, an outburst had been expected, and many different revolutionary groups were ready to take advantage of it once it had happened.

On the other hand, he concedes:

At the start, it was a boiling over of mass discontent. The workers were fed up with the war. They had no bread, they were cold, and they were furious with the bureaucrats who were supposed to control their lives.

Yet, as if perturbed by the extent of this "concession," he adds this comment (pp. 156-7):

There remains one other point of importance. The workers and the soldiers by themselves could never have made the revolution succeed. They needed money, leaders and political organization; and these they got from the many underground organizations that were interested in bringing down the Tsar.

Perhaps one day Mr. Moorehead will make it clear what in his opinion constitutes a spontaneous revolution. This interpretation of history, however, has one enormous advantage: all events can be reduced to simple versions of black and white, and the leading actors become little chessmen moved about at the master's command.

ALL THE EVIDENCE at our disposal clearly shows that Lenin was as unscrupulous about using German aid as he was about the use of money obtained through expropriation raids or other doubtful means. To Lenin it was essential to come into power, and the means by which he did so were a matter of secondary importance. If he did not say "the end justifies the means" in so many words, this nevertheless suggests a motto for his actions. He was not, however, a German agent, and he did not take any orders from the German government. If the policies of the two coincided for a time, this was bound to be a phase only: Lenin, once in power, was to work as strenuously for the overthrow of the Imperial government as he had worked for that of the Russian provisional government. This was as essential in the interests of Russia and the Bolshevik government, on which the shackles of the treaty of Brest-Litovsk had been imposed by the Imperial government, as it was in the interests of world revolution; for Lenin firmly believed that the Russian revolution needed the helping hand of the workers of Germany and other advanced capitalist countries.

It might be noted in closing that the close contacts between German official quarters and leading Bolsheviks established during World War I had important sequels. They were to reappear in Radek's connections with German military circles in 1918-19, and later in those between the Red Army and the Reichswehr. They were to figure equally in the accusations against Radek and others during the Moscow trials some twenty years later. It seems that the records of the OGPU were kept as carefully as those of the German Foreign Ministry.

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[19] See also Zeman, *op. cit.*, p. 6: the German Minister in Bern to the German Chancellor on September 30, 1915.

[20] How ludicrous the assertions about Grimm are can be seen from the documents published by Werner Hahlweg, *Lenins Rückkehr nach Russland 1917*, (Lenin's Return to Russia, 1917) Leidin, 1957, no. 10, pp. 51-4, no. 13, p. 56, no. 36, p. 80, no. 86, pp. 119-20, of April 4 to May 6, 1917.

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A Mirror of Soviet Reality

Merle Fainsod:
Smolensk under Soviet Rule,
Harvard University Press,
Cambridge, Mass., 1958.

Reviewed by Wanda Bronska-Pampuch

AT THE TIME OF my release from the Soviet forced labor camp at Kolyma in 1945, I asked the young criminal prisoner who was attending to the necessary clerical formalities connected with my discharge if I might have a look at my dossier (*delo*). After all, I thought, eight years of imprisonment as a political offender ought to entitle me to that much. A little taken aback, the young man looked up from the folder in front of him, which had my name on the cover, and replied, "No, that is forbidden. Besides, what would you get out of it anyway?" It was useless to press the matter, and so I left the camp without having found out what was in the mysterious file. Did it contain, perhaps, a statement of the grounds for my conviction; an explanation of how the "evidence" against me had been fabricated; or, possibly, a list of those who had informed against me? Much as I should have liked to know the answers, I decided that the young prisoner was doubtless right, and that a look at my dossier would probably have made me none the wiser.

This brings up the larger question of how true a picture of Soviet reality is provided by the documents stored in the massive safes and secret files of the NKVD offices and party secretariats. The ordinary Soviet citizen is inclined to believe that these records hold the answers to all the secrets and mysteries of Soviet life, but in reality they are but fragmentary clues to the citizen's hard existence and the functioning of the system. They are as diverse and complex as that existence itself—often false or unconvincing, yet sometimes remarkably genuine; frequently grim and terrifying, yet at times uplifting. The overall image pieced together from such fragments can be as true, or again as false, as any picture of the whole based on the observation of individual phenomena; how close it comes to reality depends upon the intuitive, analytical and inductive capacities of the observer.

THE EXCELLENCE OF Mr. Fainsod's study based on the materials contained in the so-called "Smolensk Archive" demonstrates that he possesses these talents in high degree. The Archive, comprising the entire documentary files of the regional CPSU headquarters at Smolensk for the period from the Bolshevik Revolution through 1938, fell into the hands of the Nazi invasion forces in 1941, was removed to Germany, and finally came into American possession at the end of the war. By dint of long and painstaking research, Professor Fainsod has succeeded in weaving this unique body of historical material into a comprehensive and authentic study of the evolution of Soviet rule in the Smolensk region during the first two, formative decades of the Communist regime. But while it is specifically the experience of this small segment of the Soviet Union, with its particular local characteristics, which the author examines, his book in fact illuminates a much broader area. For the Smolensk experience was not merely an integral part, but at the same time a reflection, of the larger experience of the nation as a whole—as the author puts it, "a mirror of Soviet reality" and a "record in miniature" of the emergence of Soviet totalitarianism and its impact on the lives of the people.

The authentic quality of Fainsod's study cannot fail to impress itself particularly upon anyone who lived in the Soviet Union during this period of national transformation. Nor need one necessarily have witnessed the specific developments in Smolensk to recognize this authenticity. The reviewer, for example, lived in the interior of the country and never saw Smolensk or any of the outlying regions. Yet the events portrayed by Fainsod have a

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Mrs. Bronska-Pampuch, who has also written under the pen-name of Alfred Burmeister, is a German journalist of Polish descent. After seven years in the Soviet Union, she was arrested in 1938 as a "spy for Pilsudski," and spent the next eight years in a concentration camp. Her book *Polen zwischen Hoffnung und Verzweiflung* (Poland Between Hope and Despair) has just been published in Germany.

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thoroughly familiar ring in that I observed their parallels elsewhere. Even the local officials who drew up the resolutions cited in the book are easily recognizable types whose counterparts were among my own acquaintances.

The author's treatment of the first few years of Soviet rule in Smolensk is perforce sketchy since the Archive itself contained little material covering this period. Only from 1920 on did the documentation start becoming more abundant. One regrets especially that Fainsod fails to bring out the revolutionary emotionalism of the early years. While this gap is probably ascribable to the paucity or shortcomings of the documents rather than to oversight on the author's part, it nonetheless remains true that, without taking into account the element of revolutionary emotionalism or romanticism, the crucial developments of this period cannot be fully understood.

AS THE Bolsheviks consolidated their grip on the reins of power, the circle of people gravitating into the new ruling class began to broaden, radically altering the original revolutionary make-up of the party. Greater stability also brought a more systematic and copious accumulation of documentary records, and through them Fainsod carefully traces the reverberations in the Smolensk region of the great social and political changes which marked the successive stages of Soviet development. Smolensk experiences its first party scandal and the first eruption of internal party opposition. It ushers in the New Economic Policy, marking an interlude of temporary compromise with the old order; then casts it aside as the great campaign of collectivization takes the stage, bringing with it the ruthless crushing of thousands of peasant families who desperately tried to resist. Smolensk also feels the impact of industrialization and the stiffening of labor discipline, and it lives through the grim nightmare of the Stalinist purges.

In all this, Fainsod's book cannot be said to add anything substantially new to the overall picture of Soviet development as already known abroad. Rather, its distinction lies in the fact that it corroborates the picture and fills it in with new detail from source material of a uniquely authentic type never before available. Unlike published Soviet source materials, the documents of the Smolensk Archive are records which were privy to the party and official organs, and not meant for the public eye. They thus afford, as the author puts it, an unparalleled "view from the inside" of the evolving processes of Soviet rule.

One of the most revealing documents cited in the book is a secret directive of May 8, 1933, under the signatures of Stalin and Molotov, which ordered "all party and Soviet workers and all organs of the OGPU, the courts, and the procuracy" to put a stop to "disorderly mass arrests in the countryside." The directive complained that all sorts of unauthorized persons, even down to subordinate *kolkhoz* officials and secretaries of party cells, were arresting anyone they chose, often "without any basis," and that the "saturnalia of arrests" had swamped the prisons with twice the number of prisoners they could handle. The authorities were therefore directed to "regularize arrests" and to "relieve congestion in the prisons" by reducing the number of prison inmates to 400,000, which was set as the maximum level for the future. The reduction was to be effected, however, mainly through the mass transfer of certain categories of detainees from the prisons to forced labor camps and labor settlements, which the directive specifically exempted from any limitation. This measure actually proved a milestone on the road to a slave-labor economy, for it did not curb arrests, but merely led to the substitution of forced labor penalties for regular imprisonment on an ever-increasing scale. By 1939, when most of the inmates of the so-called *politisolatori* (places of confinement for important political prisoners) were also transferred to forced labor camps, the latter had already swallowed up millions of NKVD victims.

OTHER DOCUMENTS cited by the author are interesting as sidelights on the development of Stalinist practice. One finds, for example, inquiries from lower-echelon party units asking what to do about the deletion of names on the proscribed list from books written by irreproachable authors, or in cases where they were mentioned together with Lenin. The stage in which such inquiries could be made, however, was only a passing one. Later, even to inquire was to risk becoming "suspect", and soon after the beginning of the Great Purge (*chistka*) all published materials containing references to proscribed persons vanished automatically and completely. It is especially to Fainsod's credit that he shows that these and other features of Stalinist dictatorship did not emerge full-blown overnight, but developed progressively, and against opposition not only from the public but even from within the party.

Indeed, as Fainsod stresses, the prevalence of widespread popular discontent and opposition to Stalinist rule is one of the most impressive facts established by the mass of evidence in the Smolensk Archive. It is a fact which is important not only in the historical context, but in the context of recent Soviet development as well. One might well surmise that the reforms instituted by Khrushchev were influenced to a considerable degree by these lessons of the past, so copiously recorded in the party archives. For, from them, Khrushchev can certainly

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recognize the past mistakes of the party leadership in hastily imposing measures that proved clearly detrimental to its claims to power. At the same time, he must be particularly apprehensive of a recurrence of the strike movements and other manifestations of worker protest which, as the Smolensk Archive attests, occurred even at the height of Stalinist repression in the 1930's.

PROF. FAINSOD'S work also provides much valuable and detailed documentation concerning the expanding power of the security police and the functioning of the machinery of law enforcement (a substantial part of the Smolensk Archive consisted of police and judicial records). In a broader sense, too, the book as a whole brings out the close interrelationship between the increasing severity of police and other totalitarian controls and "the imperatives" of rapid industrialization. The author shows how the stifling of discussion not only among the workers in the factories but also within the party organization intensified *pari passu* with the regimentation of the economy along Stalinist lines; in fact, all traces of democratic party life vanished as the industrialization effort reached its apogee. The forced industrial development of the country, accomplished without outside help, thus had the effect of destroying, one after another, all elements of democracy in the political system. Their disappearance went hand in hand with an increasing disregard of the economic needs of the population.

Still, the Smolensk region, though oppressed and unhappy, and though ruled by an inhuman police machine which served as an instrument for the subjugation and terrorization of the local party organization, developed modern industries, mechanized its agriculture, and built schools. By the time of the German invasion, the region, which in 1917 had been one of the more backward areas of a generally backward country, had vastly changed.

There is, however, nothing incongruous in the Soviet picture of tremendous material progress coupled with an oppressive system of rule. That is, there is no incongruity unless one seeks to find in the system as it has evolved some trace of the concepts of social justice which were part of the original Communist program. But it is abundantly clear that industrial and technological advance, or even cultural progress, do not, *per se*, bring about social justice; at most, they might be considered a starting-point for its attainment. Certainly, the Soviet experience demonstrates this. In order to accomplish large-scale industrialization in an unprecedentedly brief space of time, the Soviet leadership systematically stamped out the original Communist principles of social justice and those who persisted in espousing them. Fainsod's book graphically relates how this was done right down to the remotest village. The Komsomol, too, was purged in order that its members tainted with the early ideals might be replaced by a newer generation impervious to them.

Even so, the attempt at suppression was not wholly successful. With Stalin's death, and with the limited relaxation of totalitarian controls that the Soviet regime was impelled to grant in its wake, there was a rebirth among the young intelligentsia in the Soviet bloc of the early revolutionary ideals of social justice and democratic egalitarianism—ideals which, as events proved, had lost none of their vitality through long suppression under Stalin. Now once again under fire—particularly since Hungary—these ideas nevertheless still spark the imagination of young intellectuals behind the Iron Curtain. It is this sequel that we must bear in mind as we leaf through the pages of Fainsod's masterful account of one of the most brutal chapters in modern history.

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The Italian Ex-Communists

ON NOVEMBER 22 AND 23, 1958, an unusual gathering took place in Rome: some 300 ex-Communists, representing various shades of leftist opinion among the hundreds of thousands of Italians who have defected from the Communist Party, met together for the first time in a national convention. The delegates included a large number of former key officials in the party hierarchy, as well as incumbent office-holders at all governmental levels, trade union officials, intellectuals and other notables. The purpose of the convention, as outlined by its organizers, was to discuss the political platform and organizational machinery most suitable to the task of "freeing from the ill-omened influence of the Togliatti-Amentola-Pajetta clan [the PCI top leadership] those proletarians, those intellectuals, those young people who were once at our side and who feel, as we do, the vital need for democracy as being inseparable from socialism, but who still are blinded by the Togliatti myth, by the duplicity of the Italian Communist Party, by the seemingly persuasive and righteous language of the Communist leaders." [1]

This convention—and its outcome, which will be discussed shortly—has added a new element to the Italian political scene; for the growing body of defectors from the PCI must now become not only an object of bitter concern to the Italian Communist Party but also a potential political force to be taken into account by the democratic parties of both the government and its opposition—a force which aims at a reform of the left, in the process "compelling the Communist Party to become something more than a body alien to the interests of the Italian workers and to the life of the nation, a private club of fanatics and expounders of formulas." [2]

The Ranks of "the Disenchanted"

Considered merely from the standpoint of numerical strength, Italy's former Communists represent the most direct and significant proof of the political and organizational crisis which for years has beset the PCI, particularly since the double impact of Khrushchev's disclosures at the Twentieth CPSU Congress and of Moscow's brutal actions in Hungary. A few figures will attest to this crisis: according to data supplied by the PCI's organization committee, party membership decreased by 435,478 during the period 1947-57; in the same decade 100,000 young persons who formerly belonged to the Communist Youth Federation allowed their membership to lapse.

The outflow of members has been felt most acutely in northern Italy, where the large industrial centers are located and the working class is active in politics. By contrast, the PCI has remained relatively unaffected in the south-central sections of the country, where the basic source of party strength has been day laborers and poor farmers, who were culturally unprepared to understand the great ideological and political problems posed by the Khrushchev report, the Hungarian revolution, and the events in Poland. A comparison of regional membership percentages confirms the varied course of the party crisis in different sections of Italy. Of the total PCI membership, the north's contribution of 56.95 percent in 1947 has dropped to 53.5 percent today, whereas the proportionate figures for the central and southern regions have risen respectively from 22.5 to 24.1 percent and from 20.55 to 22.4 percent.

The impact of the 1956 events on the party in north Italy merely accelerated a political and organizational crisis which had been going on for years. To cite a few figures, in Turin (where the Italian Communist movement was founded back in 1921) membership in Communist cells operating within factories fell from 31,107 in 1950 to 16,712 in 1955, "thus showing how seriously the organization in industry has been affected." [3] In Milan, 15,713 party members defected from 1948 to 1953, while in the industrial centers of Liguria membership declined 8.5 percent in 1955 alone.

Further proof of the gradual withdrawal of the industrial proletariat from the Communist organization is to be found in the decrease of membership dues collected by party federations (provincial organizations). Last year the central administrative office of the PCI admitted that "with respect to 1955, fully 82 federations have collected

[1] "Libero Incontro" (Free Encounter), *Corrispondenza Socialista*, November 23, 1958.

[2] Eugenio Reale, "Relazione al Io Convegno degli ex Comunisti" (Report to the First Convention of ex-Communists), Rome, November 22-23, 1958.

[3] Gillio-D'Amico, "Le forme di organizzazione del Partito nelle fabbriche" (The forms of organization of the [Communist] Party in the factories), *Quaderno dell'Attivista* (published by the CC of the PCI), No. 12, August 1, 1956, p. 9.

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less membership dues; in twenty of these, the decrease is in excess of 10 percent"; more specifically, it pointed out that only 46 percent of the registered members in Milan, 58 percent in Turin, and 52 percent in Genoa had paid their monthly dues regularly.[4]

The same trend has been noticeable in the labor unions dominated by the Communist Party. For example, the Milan organization of the Communist-controlled Italian General Confederation of Labor (CGIL) shrank from 604,982 registered members in 1946 to 237,000 in 1957, and further to 200,000 in 1958.

Unable to ignore this enormous depletion in party ranks, the PCI leadership has attempted to explain it away with sophistical excuses. Togliatti, for example, has maintained that "it is always possible for a strong, healthy and well-directed party to experience such a decrease"; he has also denied the existence of a crisis in the Communist organization with the argument that "a political party may be said to be experiencing a crisis only when it does not succeed in formulating and implementing a course of political action in keeping with its principles."[5] Whatever else this interpretation may accomplish, it does little to soften the hard fact that more than half a million followers have, at various times, deserted the Communist organization.

Dissident Movements

In their political alignment, some of these former Communists have moved to the left, advocating a return to positions of Leninist intransigence; others have moved to the right, repudiating the party for its authoritarianism and pleading the need for democratic reform; on both sides of the line defectors have been influenced by ideological convictions and by the specific crises or experiences which induced them to abandon the party.

Chronologically speaking, the first group of dissenters to establish a splinter organization was the International Communist Party, founded in 1940. The platform of the Internationalists was one of strong opposition to Soviet domination and support of the revolutionary thesis and tactics which had been expounded by Karl Radek at the Third World Congress in July 1921; basing their stand on Radek's premise that "the Communist Party must be a workshop for revolutionary Marxism,"[6] they charged the PCI with opportunism and maintained that it had "nothing to do with the teachings of Marx and Lenin."[7]

In the period 1943-45, the PCI leadership retaliated with a campaign of threat and violence against the Internationalists resembling in all aspects the Communist attack on anarchists and Trotskyites during the Spanish Civil War. When, on July 11, 1945, the organizer of the International Communist Party, Mario Acquaviva, was found slain, his comrades insisted that "the moral and political responsibility for the murder falls on the Italian Communist Party."[8]

Meantime the PCI was using similar tactics against another dissident group, "Red Star," founded in Piedmont during the war by the old-time militant Communist, Temistocle Vaccarella. Like the Internationalists, the "Red Star" group rejected the policy of the united front and supported Lenin's thesis of revolutionary war. In December 1943 the Communist Party issued a peremptory warning that "the small-fry adventurers belonging to 'Red Star' will be unmasked as *agents-provocateurs* of the Trotsky faction and will be treated as such."[9] A few months after this warning—on June 19, 1944, Vaccarella was murdered in Milan under mysterious circumstances.

While the loss of its ablest leader brought about the dissolution of the "Red Star" group, the Internationalist Communist Party has continued in operation throughout the postwar period. Its present head is Professor Onorato Damen, a one-time Communist leader in the Italian parliament, who defected from the PCI in 1930 while serving a prison sentence for anti-Fascist activities.

IN 1948 A NEW WAVE of opposition swept through the PCI, this time as a result of the Cominform's condemnation of the Yugoslav regime. Then, as today, dissension was particularly rife in the federations operating in the industrial centers of northern Italy. In Milan, 994 members were expelled from the party as Titoist suspects during the period 1948-50; in Genoa, 159 members were expelled "for having had contacts with Titoist elements."[10] In January 1951 two Members of Parliament—Aldo Cucchi, a wartime hero of the underground liberation movement, and Valdo Magnani—were thrown out of the party as "unprincipled renegades, enemies of the working class and the party, and tools of the enemies of communism, the Soviet Union and all honest defenders of peace."[11]

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[4] "L'applicazione dei bollini mensili nello scorso anno" (Application of monthly stamps during the past year), *Ibid.*, No. 5, March 20, 1957, p. 31.

[5] Palmiro Togliatti, "Considerazioni su una crisi che non c'é e sulle crisi che ci sono" (Considerations on a non-existent crisis and on the existing crises), *Rinascita*, Nos. 1-2, January-February 1957, p. 41.

[6] Karl Radek, *Directives on the organizational structure of Communist parties, on the methods and substance of their work*, published in Italian by the PCI Publishing House, 1921, p. 95.

[7] *Prometeo*, February 1944.

[8] "Atto di Accusa" (Indictment), *Battaglia Comunista*, July 28, 1945.

[9] "Avventurieri politici" (Political adventures), *Il grido di Spartaco*, December 26, 1943.

[10] *Rapporto organizzativo della federazione comunista genovese* (Organizational report of the Genoese Communist Federation), 1953.

[11] "Due traditori" (Two traitors), *Unità*, January 30, 1951.

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This new wave of expulsions and resignations led to the formation of two additional splinter organizations—the Revolutionary Communist Groups and the Italian Workers' Movement. The former immediately identified themselves as followers of Trotsky and became affiliated with the Fourth International, while the Italian Workers' Movement, which later became the Independent Socialist Union, inclined toward a position of socialist autonomy. The Union survived for several years but was eventually dissolved in 1956-57; a group of its members followed Valdo Magnani into the Italian Socialist Party, while another group followed Aldo Cucchi into the Italian Democratic Socialist Party. The split was caused primarily by conflicting ideological viewpoints and differences in attitudes toward the new phase of crisis within the Italian Communist Party brought on by the aforementioned events of 1956.

The Current Phase of Defection

It was, of course, this crisis which led to the most recent attempts to create movements of ex-Communists in opposition to the policies and tactics of the PCI. Two factions have succeeded in organizing themselves, contributing to the process of disintegration which became apparent in the party after Khrushchev's anti-Stalin revelations and the events in Hungary and Poland. But as in the past, these groups are completely divergent in the ideological premises to which they adhere.

The first, an organization calling itself "Azione Communista" (Communist Action) was established in June 1956 as "the expression of a class movement which has always existed within the PCI";[12] its leading founders were Giulio Seniga, a former deputy-chief of the PCI's "vigilance" committee, and Bruno Fortichiari, one-time member of the Executive Committee which first directed the party. The second and far more influential group was formed in January 1957 under the leadership of Eugenio Reale, former ambassador to Poland who was expelled from the PCI in January 1956 and who subsequently founded the newspaper *Corrispondenza Socialista* as a medium for publicizing his views.

Militant in posture, the Communist Action group preaches the pursuit of power through revolutionary tactics, as against the "legalistic" tactics of electoral and parliamentary activity. Reviving Stalinist postwar criticisms of Togliatti and Thorez of France for their "failure to ignore the political situation and to unleash the revolution," Communist Action has accused the PCI leadership of "having led the proletariat down the road to defeat and of having transformed the proletarian organizations into electoral bandwagons which, [in the effort] to obstruct the forward march of capitalism and clericalism, have nothing better to offer than rivers of parliamentary chatter."[13]

On the basis of this stand, and in the hope of attracting adherents from the growing ranks of party defectors, Communist Action attempted to form a coalition based on Leninist and revolutionary positions with the aforementioned International Communist Party and Revolutionary Communist Groups, along with an organization of anarchist tendencies called Proletarian Action Groups. In December 1956 all of these organizations merged in a so-called Italian Communist Left Wing, formed as the first step "toward the establishment of a class party" and "in opposition to the counterrevolutionary policies of the present leaders of the PCI."[14] The alliance was short-lived, however: within a few months sharp ideological differences caused the withdrawal of the Internationalists and the Revolutionary Communist Groups; today a further split seems to be developing between the Communist Action militants and the libertarians of the Proletarian Action Groups. Moveover, the movement has been markedly unsuccessful in its appeal to latterday defectors from the PCI.

THAT THE CHAMPIONS of Leninist intransigence have failed in their efforts to organize a following is manifestly due to the nature of the PCI crisis itself. As has been noted, the bulk of recent defections from the party has taken place in the industrial north, where technical progress, new production techniques and economic improvements have opened the door to a gradual betterment of the workers' lot. This prospect, coupled with a realization of the systematic brutality of Soviet communism as revealed in Khrushchev's "secret" speech and in the suppression of the Hungarian revolt, has oriented a good many former Communists toward positions of reformism. To turn it the other way around, while the specific cause for the defection of hundreds of thousands of Communists was opposition to Stalinism and its methods, this sentiment has developed further, and on a wide scale, into a rejection of basic Leninist dogma on the seizure of power and the necessity of proletarian dictatorship, in situations where economic, technical, social and political conditions offer favorable prospects for a gradual change of class relationships within the framework of the democratic system.

This, in effect, is the position of the *Corrispondenza Socialista* group headed by Eugenio Reale, as expressed in a program oriented toward socialist autonomy and democratic reform of the left. In two years of propaganda

[12] *Azione Comunista*, No. 3, July 31, 1956.

[13] "Un voto di protesta" (A vote of protest), *ibid.*, No. 33, May 15, 1958.

[14] Bruno Fortichiari, "Ricostruiamo l'Internazionale operaia rivoluzionaria non subordinata ad uno stato" (Let us rebuild the revolutionary International of the workers not subordinated to one state), *ibid.*, No. 9, January 1, 1957.

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activity and polemical battle with the PCI, this group has effectively demonstrated its accurate assessment of the dominant trend of opinion among those defectors who, in its own words, "having joined the Communist Party because of a desire for freedom and in the certainty that it was the defender of the working classes' right to a larger measure of social justice, later had to desert it when they became convinced that the party, because of its ideology and leadership, could not satisfy any of these aspirations, any of these needs." [15]

Socialist Factionalism

The program and activities of the "reformist" ex-Communists are vitally related to the complex situation existing in the Italian Socialist movement, about which a few words must be said.

As may be known, the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) is the only socialist political group in Western Europe which has not been admitted to membership in the Socialist International, because of its political and organizational ties with the Communist Party and its affiliated organizations. These ties date back to August 1934, when the two parties, despite a long history of differences, formed a common front against fascism and nazism in the form of a Unity of Action Pact. The alliance fell apart in 1939 as a result of the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact, but was resumed during the war years and formally reenacted in 1946, thereafter surviving alternate phases of cooperation and dissension, including the PSI factional split of 1947 which led to the formation of the Italian Socialist Workers' Party (later reconstituted as the Italian Democratic Socialist Party). However, under the impact of the successive shocks of 1956—first the Khrushchev report, then the developments in Hungary and Poland—the PSI was finally led to declare its wish for autonomy from the PCI, formalized in a resolution passed at its 32nd Congress held in Venice in February 1957. As a result of severe internal disputes, this action basically remained a mere paper declaration; the Socialists by and large continued to collaborate with the mass organizations controlled by the Communist Party.

Three factional trends have developed within the PSI. On the right, a group under the leadership of Pietro Nenni, party secretary, and Riccardo Lombardi, has demanded absolute autonomy from the Communists. On the extreme left, a group headed by party leaders Tullio Vocchietti, Emilio Lusso and Dario Valori has sought even closer ties with the PCI in theoretical, organizational and policy matters; the role of these Socialists is akin to that of a number of East European leaders who are nominally members of the powerless Social Democratic party organizations, but actually strict adherents and transmitters of the Communist Party line. A third faction of the PSI has ostensibly acted as mediator between the two extremes, but actually has devoted its energies to preventing the issue from coming to a head; it is headed by Lelio Basso, a party leader who is alleged to have used railroading tactics to preserve the PSI-PCI alliance in the 1947 crisis, leading to the secession of the democratic Socialists.

(Editors' Note: As this issue went to press, the PSI's 33rd Congress was convened in mid-January at Naples and resulted in important victories for the Nenni faction. A new resolution in support of party autonomy was adopted by a 3-2 vote, and Nenni supporters won a majority of seats on the PSI Central Committee, where party policies are effectively directed and where pro-Communists previously predominated. How the declaration of autonomy will be implemented is yet to be seen: while the formal PSI-PCI alliance has been clearly repudiated, the Congress established that Socialists would continue to work with Communists in local coalition governments and cooperatives, and also would remain in the Communist-dominated union organization, the CGIL.)

The Reformist Program and Tactics

In this situation the ex-Communists of a reformist bent have directed their activity toward a dual effort: on the one hand, they have urged the Socialists to sever their organizational and political ties with the Communists; on the other, they are trying to build up an organizational structure of their own based on the principle of socialist autonomy.

The first of these tactics has taken the form of an intensive propaganda campaign in support of the Nenni-Lombardi faction, exhorting the PSI to translate its formal separation from the PCI into a decree of "effective autonomy from the Communists and their Soviet bosses." [16] This position is supported in part, certainly, by the logic that isolation of the PCI from its allies would help to expedite its collapse.

The second aim of establishing an organizational structure was, as was pointed out at the start of this paper, the main impetus behind the national convocation of ex-Communists last November, which the Reale group was instrumental in bringing about and in which it took a leading role. The main action of the convention was the launching of an organization called "Alleanza Socialista" (Socialist Alliance) based on the following programmatic principles: repudiation of the concept of the primacy of one state and one party; the validity of democratic practices and institutions as an end, method, and custom of governance; the resolve to contribute to the realization of socialist unity in one party dedicated to the ideals of

[15] Eugenio Reale, *op. cit.*

[16] *Ibid.*

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socialism and democracy. This action was warmly adopted by the delegates present at the convention, with the exception of such militants as the representative of the Communist Action group, who declared himself in disagreement with the ends and methods of the Socialist Alliance.

Aside from these two main lines of effort, it might be pointed out that local groups of ex-Communists have made some attempts to oppose the PCI in electoral contests. As the result of the activity of a movement of some 2,000 members formed in Sardinia, the Communit Party lost 21,000 votes in the last regional elections. In Apulia, an organization of about 1,000 former Communists managed to win a few seats on local Communal Councils during administrative elections of November 1958. In Mesagne, a province of Brindisi, an entire local section of the PCI declared itself autonomous with the encouragement of ex-Communists. While such instances are far too few to permit speculation on the effectiveness of this type of activity, they indicate an additional channel through which former Communists may attempt to make their influence felt.

WHATEVER THE OUTCOME of these various efforts of Italy's ex-Communists on the "right", it is certain that their activity has been deeply disturbing to the Italian Communist Party. Using all of the propaganda and organizational means at its disposal, the PCI has counter-attacked with a vilificatory campaign which tries to write off the ex-Communist movement as simply "an attempt, already proven unsuccessful, of another type of anti-communism to come to the fore." [17] At the same time it has attacked the advocates of socialist autonomy (both within and without the PSI) as plotters of a "social democratic deviation," [18] and has brought heavy pressure to bear, through existing inter-party links and mass organizations, in support of the pro-Communist elements in the PSI.

What happens within the Italian Socialist Party will, of course, affect the future course of the Socialist Alliance founded by the ex-Communists. On the basis of their tactics and program to date, it seems reasonable to assume that the members of the Alliance sooner or later will turn toward the PSI—*if* it is able to assert its autonomy—or alternatively toward the Italian Democratic Socialist Party. As in France, where Communist Party defectors under the leadership of Auguste Lecoeur and Pierre Hervé have joined with the French Socialist Party (SFIO), so in Italy the crisis of communism seems to have led the majority of defectors inexorably toward a course of reformistic socialism.

Enzo Tiberti

(Mr. Tiberti is an Italian journalist and himself a former member of the Italian Communist Party.)

[17] Maurizio Ferrara, "Tentativi revisionistici e fallimento degli ex" (Revisionist attempts and failure of the ex[-Communists]), *Rinascita*, January 1958, p. 47.

[18] "Un articolo di Togliatti sulla politica del PSI" (An article by Togliatti on the policies of the Italian Socialist Party), *Unità*, No. 279, November 23, 1958.

IN FUTURE ISSUES —

The Demise of the French CP?—*articles by Michel Collinet and François Bondy*
Whither Italian Communism?, *by Giorgio Galli*
Roots and Sprouts of the Antitotalitarian Revolution, *by Paul Barton*
Is There a Middle Class in Eastern Europe?, *by Ernst Halperin*
The Non-Communist Parties in Czechoslovakia, *by Edward Taborsky*
Power and Status in the CPSU, *by Seweryn Bialer*

NOTE: The series of articles on communism in underdeveloped countries will be resumed in the March-April issue with discussions of Indian communism by Selig Harrison and Brij Mohan Toofan.

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